

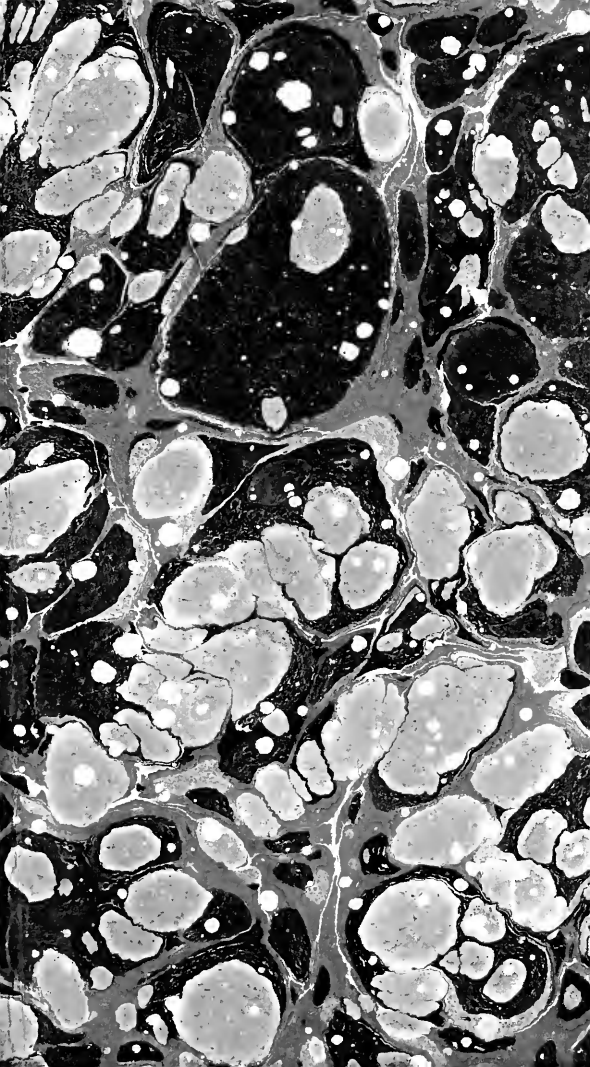
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THE
COLLECTED POEMS

OF THE LATE

.N. T. CARRINGTON.

VOL. I.



THE
COLLECTED POEMS

OF THE LATE
N. T. CARRINGTON.

EDITED
BY HIS SON, H. E. CARRINGTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
LONGMAN AND CO.

1834.

H. E. CARRINGTON, PRINTER, BATH.

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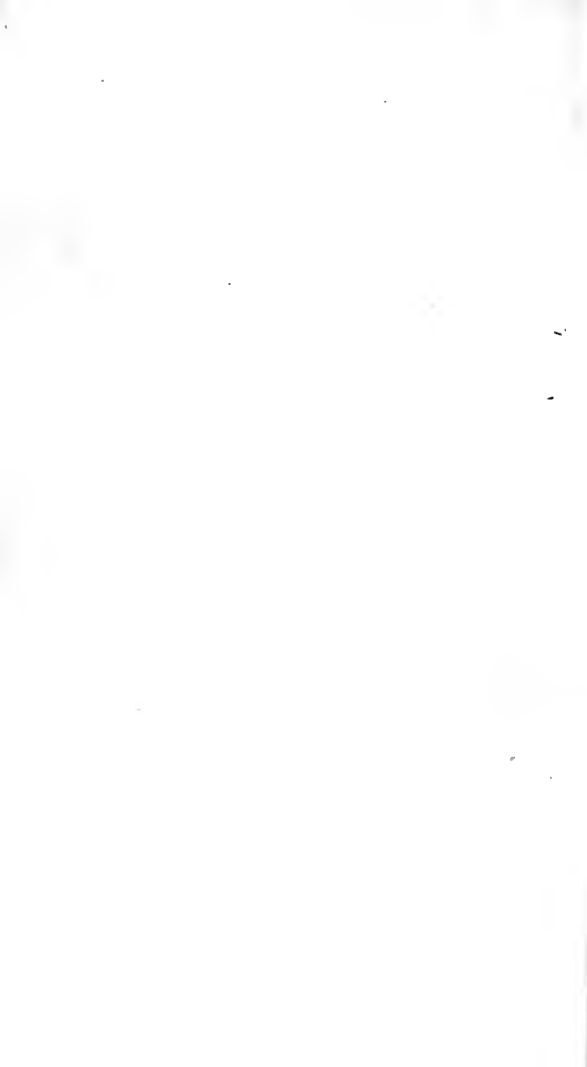
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BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

SINCE my father's death in 1830, I have been repeatedly urged, and particularly by my friends in Devonshire, to print, in a cheap and popular form, a complete collection of his writings. The truth is, that I should long ago have published such an edition if the duties of my station had not deprived me of the leisure required for the execution of some contemplated objects which I am, even now, obliged to forego. I had designed to illustrate many of the poems in these volumes with notes which might probably have proved interesting to those among the readers of the following pages who reside amid the localities to which my father's poems chiefly

relate, but the enquiries for the publication have lately become so numerous, that I feel I should be doing wrong by longer delaying its appearance in the hope of being able to accomplish designs which I may, perhaps, never have leisure enough to carry into effect.

The object of the present preface is to lay before the reader a brief account of my late father's life. Simple and uneventful is the story which I have to tell. The careers of few men have been so barren of "moving accident" as was that of the Author of "Dartmoor," and I address myself to the subject with a settled consciousness that, in the attempt which I am about to make, I shall have to deal more with the description of thoughts and feelings than with the narration of that stirring incident which is so necessary to render biography an acceptable kind of reading to the many.

For some time previous to his death, my father had been repeatedly requested to draw up, for the gratification of his immediate friends, some particulars of his life. His invariable answer to such ap-

plications was—that a memoir of himself might be comprised in a very few words—that his career had been one of the utmost monotony—that, leaving the public out of the question, he could write no biography of himself which could prove interesting even to his immediate connections—and that those of his townsmen who had been acquainted with “the noiseless tenour” of his life could not but smile at the idea of “N. T. Carrington’s Memoirs.” Shortly after his decease, however, I discovered that the solicitations of his friends had not been entirely without effect. On examining his papers, I found a small memorandum book, in the first page of which was a note addressed to myself, and this, with the matter it introduced, I here transcribe as under:—

January, 21, 1830.

“Dear Henry,

“I have been repeatedly spoken to by various persons to leave some account of my life (*my* life!) which, say they, if hereafter prefixed to my “‘Remains,’ may probably be productive of some

“benefit to the family. It is this consideration,
“my dear son, *and this only*, that prompts me to
“leave you some materials from which you may
“draw up a memoir. Let it be as correct, and as
“near the spirit of the MS. as possible.—I am, my
“dear Henry, your affectionate father,

“N. T. CARRINGTON.”

“My father and mother were natives of Ply-
“mouth, and to that town I owe my birth, which
“took place in 1777. Soon after I was born, my
“parents removed to Plymouth Dock. In addi-
“tion to being employed in the Dock-Yard, my
“father was in business as a grocer, and, at one
“period of his life, he was possessed of consider-
“able property. When I had attained my fifteenth
“year, my father proposed to apprentice me to
“Mr. Foot, then First Assistant in the Dock-Yard.
“A handsome sum of money was to have been
“paid down as the price of my admission as Mr.
“Foot’s apprentice. Such things were allowed
“then; I believe that they now manage very differ-
“ently. In consequence, however, of some differ-

“ence, I was finally bound apprentice to Mr.
“Thomas Fox, a measurer.

“I was totally unfit, however, for the profession.
“Mild and meek by nature, fond of literary pur-
“suits, and inordinately attached to reading, it is
“strange that a mechanical profession should have
“been chosen for me. It was principally, however,
“my own fault. My father was attached to the
“Dock-Yard, and wished to see me in it; and as
“the popular prejudice in those days among the
“boys of the town was in favour of the Yard, I was
“carried away by the prevailing mania, and was,
“accordingly bound apprentice. This, however,
“had scarcely been done, when I repented, and
“too late found that I had embraced a calling
“foreign to my inclinations. Dissatisfaction follow-
“ed, and the noise and bustle of a Dock-Yard were
“but ill suited to a mind predisposed to reflection
“and the quietest and most gentle pursuits. The
“*ruffianism* (I will not change the term) of too
“many of the apprentices, and, indeed, of too many
“of the men, sickened me. Let no parent place

“ his child in the Dock Yard at Plymouth, unless
“ he have previously ascertained that his health,
“ strength, personal courage, and general habits of
“ thinking and acting, will make him a match for
“ the desperate spirits with whom he will have to
“ contend. I hope that the condition of the Yard
“ in respect to the apprentices is now ameliorated ;
“ but I cannot help, although I have been emanci-
“ pated so long, and am now 53 years of age,—I
“ cannot, I say, refrain from registering my detest-
“ ation of the blackguardism which *did* prevail in
“ the Yard at the time of my unfortunate appren-
“ ticeship.”

Here ceased the only record, under his own hand, which I have of my father's early career. *Why* his narrative was discontinued will be sufficiently explained by the following extract of a letter received from him about the time at which the above sentences were penned.

“ My distressing shortness of breathing conti-
“ nues ;—I cannot compose ;—I cannot think ;—the
“ universe is a blank to me.—When the breathing is

“very difficult, I wander from room to room—into
“my little garden—into the street;—I look into the
“face of the blue heavens—on the houses—on the
“pavement—everywhere;—all is pain—no relief;—
“I am choaking;—what, at such a time, are the
“sunny heavens and the green earth and the busy
“streets to me!”

I take up my father's story from the place at which he relinquished it. His situation in the Dock-Yard became every day more disagreeable to him. His earnest and continual entreaties that his parents would remove him to a more congenial occupation were totally unavailing; and seeing, after a lapse of about three years, no chance of improving his condition without taking the matter into his own hands, he left the Yard, or, in common parlance, “ran away.” He soon had bitter reason for repenting the step which he had taken. Not daring to seek his father's roof, — finding himself thrown upon the world without home or refuge,—in a moment of desperation he entered himself, as it is called, on board a ship of war, and during the short time he

was afloat he was present at the defeat of the Spanish fleet by Sir John Jervis, off Cape St. Vincent on the 14th of February, 1797. In commemoration of this event, he wrote some verses which were the first he ever composed. They attracted the notice and commendation of his captain, who ordered the youthful writer into his presence—bestowed on him a severe but kindly-meant lecture on the rashness of his conduct, and said he should prove how desirous he was to promote my father's welfare by dismissing him from a service to which he was by no means suited, and sending him, as soon as possible, home to his friends. This was done the moment the ship arrived in England ;—his parents forgave the rebellion against their authority which had led to this naval freak, and he was at last freely allowed to follow the bent of his inclination in the choice of a profession. He fixed upon that of public teacher, and his system of tuition, even at that early stage of his career, was generally acknowledged to be of a very superior character.

About seven years afterwards, he removed to Maidstone in Kent, where, in 1805, he married my mother. In this town he pursued, for about five years, his avocations as public teacher, and, during this time, he formed connections among the inhabitants of that place to which he always adverted with feelings of the warmest interest. To the latest period of his life, some of his most pleasant recollections had reference to the kindness which he experienced from "the fine-spirited inhabitants of Maidstone," as he invariably termed them. It is a great satisfaction to his family to know that he was respected by the inhabitants of Maidstone as highly as he respected them. Nearly thirty years after he left that town, we received a noble proof that our parent is there still "freshly remembered," and if ever I cease to be mindful of which "may my right hand forget her cunning."

Passionately fond as my father always was of natural scenery, the beautiful neighbourhood of Maidstone furnished him, in his hours of relaxation, with an unfailing source of rich gratification. The

exquisite rural pictures in that charming vicinity became vividly impressed on his mind, and to recur in imagination to their varied charms, was, in after years, his favourite occupation in many a leisure hour. Some of my earliest remembrances carry me back to the childish pleasure with which I have so frequently listened to his glowing descriptions of the most remarkable scenes near Maidstone,—the picturesque vale of Aylesford—the precipitous and wood-crested hills of Boxley—the fertile fields of Farleigh, and the grey and crumbling ruins of Allington Castle with the placid Medway in its front winding gracefully towards the sea amid herbage of the freshest green and luxuriant woods of infinitely varied leaf.

My father remained at Maidstone, as I have already stated, about five years and he then returned to Plymouth Dock at the pressing solicitations of numerous friends who wished him to undertake the education of their sons. I have no doubt that strong attachment to the place of his birth—the “Local Love” to which, in the course

of his writings, he so frequently and warmly alludes—influenced, in a powerful degree, his decision on this occasion.

The academy which he established on his return to Plymouth Dock (1809) was conducted by him, without intermission, until about six months of his death in 1830, being twenty-one years of heavy and unceasing toil, making his scholastic experience amount altogether to the long space of thirty-three years. For very nearly the whole of this time, he was employed, with the exception of not more than two hours a day for meals, from seven in the morning until half past seven in the evening, during the summer; and from nine in the morning until eight at night in winter. I mention thus particularly his hours of labour for the purpose of adding, that it was either before his hour of commencing business, or after that of closing, that he occupied himself in literary composition. I say it to his honour—and I feel proud in saying it—that, ardently attached as he was to his poetical pursuits, he never suffered them to interfere, in the slightest degree, with the duties

of the situation in which it had pleased Providence to place him. Nothing but severe illness could keep him from his avocations one moment after, or induce him to quit them one moment before, the regularly appointed time. His scrupulousness on this point was, indeed, extreme, and he often made it a matter of pardonable self-congratulation that he had never suffered his literary inclinations—strong as they were—to interfere with the routine of his daily business. He did not, however always obtain credit for this conscientious attention to the duties of his profession. More than one pupil was removed from his care on the absurd supposition that he neglected his business by writing poetry in school hours! “What an idea of poetry” said he to me on one of these occasions, “must this
“man have, to suppose it possible for me, or any
“one else, to compose amid the restlessness and
“stunning din of sixty boys! But there is one
“comfort in the matter ;—I cannot be angry with
“such a man.”

The circumstances under which he composed are

so affectingly alluded to in the brief Address to the Reader, prefixed to his "Banks of Tamar," that I trust I need make no apology for inserting it here.

"TO THE READER.

"The severity of criticism may be softened by the intimation that the MSS. of this volume passed from the author to his printer without having been inspected by any literary friend.

"Other circumstances very unfavourable to literary composition have attended this work. In the celebrated tale of 'Old Mortality' Mr. Pattieson, the village teacher, after describing with admirable fidelity his anxious and distressing labours during the day, observes, 'The Reader may have some conception of the relief which a solitary walk, in the cool of a fine summer evening, affords to the head which has ached and the nerves which have been shattered for so many hours in plying the task of public instruction.'

" 'My chief haunt,' he continues, 'in these hours of golden leisure, is the banks of the small stream which, winding through a lone vale of green bracken, passes in front of the village school-house,' &c. But the teacher of Gandercleugh possessed advantages which never fell to the lot of the writer of this work. Engaged, like that famed personage, in the education of youth, his labours

“ have seldom been relinquished till the close of our long-
“ est summer days, when, instead of retiring to the banks
“ of a beautiful stream, he has almost uniformly been
“ driven by business connected with his arduous profession,
“ or by literary cares, to his solitary study at home. There,
“ depressed by the previous fatigues of the day, he has
“ occasionally indulged in composition and hence this
“ volume, the production of many a pensive and abstracted
“ hour.”

The subject and date of my father's first poetical attempt have been already mentioned. From that time until the year 1818 he continued to write occasional pieces which were published in the provincial papers, and in various London periodicals, under the signature N. T. C. These productions attracted much attention, particularly in Devonshire to which their subjects principally related. In the above-mentioned year, at the suggestion of his friends, he resolved on collecting into a volume his scattered effusions. Being desirous that his fugitive verses should be preceded by a poem of some length, he then “roughed out” his “Banks of Tamar,” and his volume under that title, containing all which

he had up to that time written, issued from the press in 1820. It was received with considerable favour—was spoken of in very high terms by the London and provincial periodicals—and it gained him the friendship of many leading noblemen and gentlemen of the West of England.

In 1824 (I believe) the Royal Society of Literature offered a premium for the best poem on “Dartmoor.” That being a region with whose wild and magnificent scenery my father was intimately acquainted—having resided nearly all his life near its Western border, and for above thirty years been in the habit of occasionally exploring its vast and savage solitudes,—he thought it would not be presumptuous in him to become a competitor, or to hope, that though, as a poet, his pretensions might not be so great as those of many others who might contend for the prize, yet that in *fidelity* of description he should be found second to few. With this view he wrote his “Dartmoor,” but it was never submitted for competition, as the premium was awarded several months before he became aware

that the time for presenting it had gone by, no notice of that occasion having met his observation. The prize was awarded to a beautiful poem by Mrs. Hemans, with whom my father had subsequently the pleasure of becoming acquainted and of whose acknowledged poetical talents he was a warm admirer.

Having missed the object for which the Poem was written, my father threw it aside, without, I believe, entertaining the slightest intention of ever laying it before the public. By some chance, however, it came under the notice of the late W. Burt, Esq., a gentleman of considerable literary attainments, and Secretary of the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce, who advised its publication, and in 1826 it accordingly appeared, with valuable historical and topographical notes by Mr. Burt, and etchings of scenery by P. H. Rogers, Esq., then of Stonehouse, Devon.

The success of "Dartmoor" far exceeded my father's most sanguine hopes. It was noticed in most gratifying terms by the periodical writers, and

such was its popularity, that a second edition became necessary, and was sent to press, in about six weeks after the appearance of the first. I may here mention that his late Majesty, George the Fourth, ordered his opinion of the poem to be transmitted to the Author in the shape of Fifty Guineas. My father was subsequently indebted to his Majesty for more than one gracious mark of kindness and condescension.

After the publication of "Dartmoor," my father continued, as before, to compose occasional pieces, most of which appeared in the Magazines and Annuals. These were printed in a separate volume in 1830, under the title of "My Native Village," the name of the leading poem, and which has been considered one of his most pleasing productions.

The fatal disease — pulmonary Consumption — which terminated my father's existence, made its first appearance towards the close of 1827, and in a few months it was evident to all who looked upon him that his days were numbered. He continued, however, to discharge the duties of his occupation

until the end of March, 1830. The noble independence of spirit which formed the leading characteristic of his nature, and the high sense of duty by which, through life, he was invariably actuated, induced him, in opposition to the earnest entreaties of his relations and friends, to struggle on as long as his strength would allow ; but, at the period above mentioned he became so entirely worn out by the inroads of his mortal complaint that he was obliged to give up his school. If it were not improper to fill the public ear with details of private life, I could relate some most touching instances of the manly resolution and unflinching perseverance which he opposed to the distressing sufferings which it was his lot to undergo. These sufferings were alluded to by him in the following introduction to "My Native Village."

"I have not published any new volume since the publication of 'Dartmoor' so many years ago. A severe and protracted illness has prevented me from writing a poem of any length, and if the reader should occasionally perceive traces of languor in the present publication, I trust he will impute them to the proper cause. I am not,

“however, without hope that, although this volume was
“composed under some of the most distressing circum-
“stances that ever fell to the lot of man, the ingenuous
“critic will find, in some pages, reasons for commenda-
“tion.”

On relinquishing his school, my father removed with his family to Bath, and, though reduced to a state of great exhaustion, he was forcibly struck with the beauties of this “city of palaces,” which he then gazed upon for the first time. I have in my possession some fragments of a short poem which he commenced on this subject, but which his extreme debility prevented him from completing. He grew gradually worse until the 2nd of September, 1830, on the evening of which day he calmly and peacefully expired, at the comparatively early age of fifty-three, leaving a widow and six children.

He lies buried in the quiet little church-yard of Combehay, a sequestered and interesting village about four miles from Bath, seated deep in a majestic and unfrequented valley which contains some of the finest and most luxuriant scenery in the

West. At the risk of exciting a smile at what may, perhaps, be considered by some as a mere idle imagination, I may here observe, that Combehay was chosen as the place of his interment because his family wished that his remains should rest in a spot which, when living, he would have loved full well.

“Around his grave let sweetest flowers upspring,
In memory of that fragrance which was once
From his mild manners quietly exhaled.*

My father's personal character was powerfully calculated to ensure the strongest love and esteem of those with whom he was intimate. If ever man's heart overflowed with the “milk of human kindness,” *his* heart so overflowed. In manner he was reserved and grave, but mild affability and an earnest desire to please all who crossed his path, constantly proved that it was the semblance only of sternness which sate upon his intelligent features. He abhorred, from his very soul, the slightest modifi-

* Chiabrera.

cations of injustice, wrong, or oppression, in whatever shape they might appear; and perfect independence of spirit ruled his every thought and deed. He loved and practised virtue for its own pure sake; and, without shew of formality, he was, in spirit and in practice, a humble and an earnest Christian. The imperfections from which the best of men have not been wholly exempt he, no doubt, shared; but, looking back on a close intercourse with him of some twenty years, I can say, with perfect truth, that I do not recollect one single instance in which he was guilty of word or action unbecoming the character of an upright man—a husband—father—friend—or useful member of society. Hence the affection which his children felt for him as a parent was not greater than the respect which they entertained for him as a man; with them his memory is embalmed in deep veneration and enduring love.

In business, I have already said, he was indefatigably laborious—always working and hoping—never dismayed,—sometimes depressed, but never

entirely cast down. Even when in the very jaws of Consumption he continued to project improvements in his method of tuition, and to sketch the plans of new poems, to be carried into effect if it had pleased Providence to restore him to health.

His local attachment, as manifested in his poems, was extremely strong. In every thing relating to his native county, and particularly to the district round Plymouth and Devonport, he took a warm and constant interest. To praise Devonshire and its scenery was the sure road to his heart.

His habits of life were simple and retiring. The hours not consumed in his school, or devoted to composition, were mostly spent in the bosom of his family. In his latter years he seldom went into society, but when he did, his varied knowledge—his exhaustless stores of anecdote—and his vigorous power of placing every subject on which he touched in new and striking combination, enabled him to shine with the brightest of those among whom he happened to be thrown. His appreciation of himself was, however, extremely

modest. I have never met with a man who, in bearing and in spirit was more unassuming.

His love of nature was intense—it formed the never-failing under-current of all his thoughts and musings. Cooped up from morning till night between four walls—his nerves shattered with “plying the task of public instruction,” his glimpses, brief and few, of the beautiful world around us were productive to him of a degree of delight unknown to the happier “sons of leisure.” A green field—a solitary tree—a burst of sunshine—a butterfly on the wing—the gurgling of a brook—or the voice of a lonely bird, sufficed at all times to furnish him with cheerful impulses to pleasant meditation. His impressions of all he saw were vivid and lasting. It was not his custom to take notes on visiting scenes which he intended to describe; his sketches were made entirely from memory, and I am enabled to say, that those which are the most faithful, and which have attracted the largest share of public commendation, were executed several years after he had seen the objects to which they refer.

After long periods of unbroken confinement, his yearnings after "sylvan liberty" were extremely strong. His feelings on such occasions were like those of the Frenchman who, while being removed from the Bastile, where he had been imprisoned for twenty years, to the place of execution, exclaimed "Oh that I might once more look upon a tree!" With reference to this point, I am tempted to make the following quotation from a little poem by my father entitled "The Holiday" and which will be found in volume II. of this publication, page 232. After alluding to the enjoyments which are at the command of him who to a love of nature joins the possession of leisure, the poem proceeds as follows.

"What are *his* joys to *mine*? The groves are green,
And fair the flowers; and there are ever seen
By him the mountain's breast, the hills, the woods,
Grass-waving fields, and bright and wandering floods;
The lays of birds are ever on his ear,
Music and sylvan beauty crown his year;—
But if to *him* the rural reign have power
To fill with joy the swift-revolving hour,
What rapture must be *mine*, so seldom given,
To feel the beam and drink the gale of heaven !

For O ! I love thee, Nature, and my eye
Has felt " the witchery of the soft blue sky ;"
Bear witness, glowing Summer, how I love
Thy green world here, thy azure arch above !
But seldom comes the hour that snaps my chain,
To me thou art all-beautiful in vain ;
Bird, bee, and butterfly, are on the wing,
Songs shake the woods, and streams are murmuring ;
But far from them—the world's o'er-labour'd slave,
My aching brow no genial breezes lave ;
Few are the gladsome hours that come to cheer
With flowers and songs my dull, unvarying year :
Yet *when they come*, as now,—from loathed night
The bird upsprings to hail the welcome light
With soul less buoyant than I turn to thee,
Priz'd for thy absence, sylvan Liberty."

The character of by far the greater portion of my father's descriptive poetry is as purely descriptive as it is perhaps possible for such poetry to be. On the workings of the mind he therein touches but seldom and briefly. His episodes are, nevertheless, strikingly beautiful, and, together with his isolated poems on moral life, sufficiently prove that he possessed, in a high degree, the power of

painting effective pictures of human thought and action. His writings frequently breathe an air of chastened sadness which they owe to the untoward circumstances amid which by far too many of them were composed; with reference to this, one of his most able critics has said, "Mr. Carrington's Muse is the Spirit of Melancholy;" this is partially true, but it must at the same time be observed that there is no querulous weakness in the passages which are tinged by the feelings of depression under which they were written.

On the general merits of my father's poetry I purposely avoid remarking at length. His productions have been long before the public, their qualities have been freely discussed, and I am proud to say that they have been highly approved by a large circle of readers, including individuals of elevated standing in the literary world "whose praise is fame." Anything, therefore, which I might advance on the subject would, I am inclined to believe, be considered entirely uncalled for. But there is one testimony in favour of my father's writings which I

feel it my duty to offer, inasmuch as it relates to a point on which, from the circumstances of my early life, I am, perhaps, rather peculiarly qualified to give an opinion. I allude to the striking *fidelity* of his descriptions in the poem of "Dartmoor." His pictures of other scenes are equally true, but I say nothing of these because there are few readers of taste and observation who are not able to judge whether portraitures of the softer features of nature are, or are not mainly correct, those features being more or less scattered over the whole of our land. But in order to judge correctly touching the fidelity of a poem on Dartmoor, the reader must be absolutely acquainted, by actual observation, with that desolate but most interesting solitude. It has, in truth, a character peculiarly its own; it is an unexampled chaos of the wonderful and wild. I have wandered much in my own and other lands, but I have seen no place like Dartmoor. With its three hundred square miles of mountain and ravine—rock and morass—precipice and foaming river, I became in early life most intimately acquainted.

Many of my happiest days have been spent on that majestic Moor. I have trodden at all hours, and in all seasons, its rugged and mist-swept hills—its rock-strewed and torrent-haunted glens—and its wide expanses of purple heath, stretching miles and miles away in utter and most impressive solitude. I trust, therefore, that I shall not be considered presumptuous in bearing witness to the striking truth of my father's moorland pictures. In my humble opinion they are as faithful as it is possible for them to be. If I were not, on other grounds, under the deepest obligations to my father, I should owe him my warmest acknowledgments for the gratification I have experienced from the poem to which I now more particularly allude, as I have been indebted to the descriptions which it contains for the awakening of unnumbered happy recollections of by-gone times.

—————“ in lonely rooms and mid the din
Of towns and cities I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood and felt along the heart.” *

* Wordsworth.

In the performance of his duty as a public teacher, it was my father's constant endeavour to make his pupils *think*, and not, as is too much the custom, to fill the heads of boys with mere words and ill-assorted facts. He took care that his pupils should understand the spirit as well as the letter of all which they learned under his guidance; he strove to give them general information which might be serviceable to them in their passage through life, and to endow them (if I may be allowed the expression) with a sort of steam-power aptitude—a kind of generally-available force—which might be advantageously applied to any useful pursuit in which they might engage when called upon to take their part in the business of the world. The effects of such a system not being immediately apparent, my father would, no doubt, have better consulted his worldly interests if he had sought to make his boys excel in specific superficialities more directly calculated to excite the admiration of family circles; but he preferred the honest plan of consulting the solid

welfare of those placed under his charge, and he had the satisfaction of knowing that his object was, in the majority of cases, attained. It was his pride to say that most of his boys had turned out well.

To all kinds of quackery in education he was, indeed, a most determined foe, and he availed himself of all possible opportunities to denounce every thing of this sort which fell under his observation. By way of conclusion to this part of my subject, I beg to quote the following circular which my father addressed to the parents of his boys at a time when school exhibitions were all the rage in Plymouth Dock :—

“ December 19th, 1823.

“ If, at the commencement of vacations, I invite you not
“ to what are erroneously termed examinations, to the per-
“ formance of plays, to recitations, &c. it is because I
“ understand my profession too well, have too much respect
“ for you and too much concern for the welfare of my
“ pupils, to waste so much precious time, as is usually
“ wasted in preparing for these useless exhibitions. If the
“ public knew how many valuable weeks, and even months,
“ are thrown away in arrangements for these specious but

“delusive displays, the practice would speedily be discontinued, and something different from applause would be awarded to the projectors. I know some worthy teachers who, impelled by irresistible circumstances, have engaged in these follies; but they deeply deplore that they have been obliged to countenance them. These periodical exhibitions are injurious to discipline;—they make boys vain, pert, assuming, unmanageable at home, and disorderly at school. The youth who has appeared on a public stage, and has had his budding vanity excited by the applause of a partial audience, is in no small danger as to his future education and morals. An excellent writer in one of the monthly magazines observes: ‘I have attended some of these exhibitions, and I know instances of the worst of consequences resulting from them. Should the boy chance to get a tolerable portion of public applause, unaccustomed to the pleasing salutation, he immediately ascribes that to merit which is the tribute of good nature, ignorance, or partiality. The father, poor man, pleased to hear his darling child spoken of in terms of approbation, and little aware of the mischief that may ensue, believes his son to be a prodigy, and tells him all he believes. Flattery, caresses, and plum-cake are given to him by turns as a reward for his exertions, and the urchin returns to school with a conviction that he is the Cicero, the Roscius, or the Garrick, which he has been denominated round the Christmas table.’

“ But then these mummeries are the ‘*rage*’ of the present
“ *enlightened* day. The most learned as well as the most
“ illiterate teachers (O shame!) cater with assiduity for the
“ vitiated public taste. It is of no consequence, it seems,
“ that one-fourth of the year, at least, is thrown away in
“ merely committing *words* to memory,—that the subordi-
“ nation of a school is destroyed,—that boys are rendered
“ forward, petulant, impudent ;—*it is fashionable*. There
“ are the delightful anticipations of the forthcoming per-
“ formances,—the music,—the transparencies,—the well-
“ dressed belles and beaux, or in newspaper phraseology,
“ ‘the beauty and fashion of the neighbourhood’—the
“ oration—the harangue,—the debate—the play—the roars
“ of applause as each juvenile aspirant appears on the
“ stage, and the thunders of acclamations as he retires ;—
“ all these things are absolutely irresistible : the friends
“ of the youthful performers are delighted ; the master
“ smiles at the dupes of credulity and *fashion* ; and
“ the boys are self-satisfied, inflated, and—spoiled. Our
“ ancestors (*old fools*) acted differently.

“ This is a day also of new systems. We have quack
“ teachers and quack systems, *ad infinitum*. The best of
“ these wonder-working schemes will not bear skilful
“ analysis ; and some of them are recommended by teachers
“ merely because the agency of monitors, &c. enables them
“ to enjoy a life of absolute idleness. No system can suc-
“ ceed without the strenuous, incessant, individual exertions

“of the master, and even an indifferent method will, by
 “such industry, produce effects very superior to those
 “resulting from that very extensive agency of boys which
 “now prevails, and which may be put into motion by a
 “teacher of very moderate abilities.

“I have not addressed you for a very considerable time.
 “I have left newspaper puffs, and examinations, and plays,
 “and orations, and debates to others—to the ignorant, to
 “the idle, to the interested. I have not resorted to specious
 “artifices to obtain your favour. I have been content to
 “work on in silent industry. Think not, however, that I
 “have been less industrious than those who have made
 “more noise; nor that I have been slow to introduce into
 “my system of education every *really judicious improvement*
 “which my own experience, and the experience of others,
 “have suggested.

“A distinguishing characteristic also of my seminary is,
 “a severe œconomy in regard to the expence of books.
 “Those which are used are not numerous, but they are
 “*well read*. On this subject I have annexed an extract*

* ““In some schools they make a child read a dozen pages in
 “Corderius, and then throw it aside and begin Æsop's Fables, which
 “is treated in the same manner, in order to read Eutropius: and
 “when I pass by a Latin School and see boys *loaded with large satch-*
 “*els full of books*, I pity the boys and wonder at the master's folly
 “(roguery). What purpose can this practice serve, but *to make a*
 “*trade of selling books*, unworthy of a liberal minded and conscien-
 “tious teacher.”—Dr. MORRICE.”

“Dr. Knox makes similar observations.”

“ from ‘ The Art of Teaching,’ a volume by Dr. Morrice,
“ a London Teacher ; and there are few who will not ac-
“ knowledge the justice of his remarks.

“ I am, your’s obediently,

“ N. T. CARRINGTON,

“ Classical and Commercial School,

“ Plymouth-Dock.”

It is necessary for me to say, that the present publication contains no poems which have not been already before the public. In the volume entitled “ My Native Village,” which appeared but a very short time before my father’s death, he included all the original pieces which he had then on hand ; and subsequent to the printing of that book he wrote only a few fragments which are too imperfect to be now produced. He had sketched out the plan of a descriptive poem to be entitled “ Devon,” which he proposed to write in the style and measure of “ My Native Village,” and to the execution of which he looked forward with considerable pleasure. He had also projected a volume in twelve short books to be entitled “ The Months,”

and in which he intended to describe, in blank verse, the appearances of external nature throughout the year.

I avail myself of the present opportunity to offer my warmest thanks to the numerous gentlemen who were so kindly attentive to my father during his illness. My acknowledgments are especially due to the Rev. J. P. Jones, late of North Bovey, Devon, but now of Alton, Staffordshire; to the Rev R. Mason, of Widdicombe on the borders of Dartmoor; J. D. Basset, Esq., Chairman of the Devon County Sessions; George Harvey, Esq., F.R.S. (to whom my father intended to dedicate his proposed poem "Devon"); H. Woollcombe, Esq., Col. Hamilton Smith, the Rev. R. Lampen and G. Wightwick, Esq. of Plymouth; R. Ellery, Esq. of Boxhill near Pennycross (to whom "Dartmoor" was dedicated) and to my father's medical attendants, Sir George Magrath, M.D. of Plymouth, and T. Rutter, Esq. of Devonport.

I have now arrived at the conclusion of this very imperfect sketch. There are some few who, I know, will think I have written too little, and many who will think that I have written too much. I can only say, that in what I have set down, I have felt it my duty to be guided entirely by my own feelings;—I have suffered myself to be governed by no other consideration whatever.—I leave the subject with a regretful consciousness that I have made but a very poor attempt to do justice to the character of one who, if it were possible that I could ever forget his anxious and affectionate watchings over me as a father, must always remain indelibly engraven on my heart as a friend and a brother.

II. E. CARRINGTON.

BATH CHRONICLE OFFICE,
OCTOBER, 1834.

DARTMOOR :

A Descriptive Poem.

——— “ Let the misty mountain winds be free,
To blow against thee.”

Wordsworth.



PREFACE TO DARTMOOR.

DARTMOOR is generally imagined to be a region wholly unfit for the purposes of poetry, but they who entertain such an opinion know very little of that romantic solitude. They have never traced the turbulent mountain torrent from its source, down through the rock-strewed glens, to the luxuriant valleys of the south, where its fresh waters give life and green beauty to the softened landscape;—they have never lingered round any of the thousand springs that “gush up in secret,”—loved haunts of the water-ouzel, whose silver voice is heard near them through the long summer day;—they have not gazed from the shivered top of Dewerstone on the hawk screaming and sailing round his eyrie in that majestic cliff;—nor thrown a delighted glance on the course of the Cad, brawling for ever over his wild and rugged channel. Their footfalls have not aroused the timid hare from his refuge in the “si-

lently decaying" wood of Wistman ;—nor, on a rich autumnal evening, have they beheld, from the elevated brow of Sheepstor, the sun setting in melowered glory behind the distant and broken ridges of the Cornish mountains.

It would indeed be difficult to find a more poetical subject than the present ; for Dartmoor is hallowed by the most interesting associations, and forms of beauty and of grandeur every-where meet the eye of a close observer of nature. The purple heath-bell springs up beneath his feet—the variegated lichen encrusts the shivered rock—the creeping moss sheds a loveliness over the moist hill-side—the fern waves gracefully in the passing wind—the spiral fox-glove displays its speckled bosom—the tall reed and the glossy plumes of the cotton-rush nod in the same breeze that wafts along the delicate thistle down—the torrent fills the glen with romantic music—the mountain bee hums his soothing lullaby, and the song of many a melodious bird echoes sweetly amid the frowning crags. He, however, who wishes to behold the moorland in its utmost magnificence should visit it when the wintry gale is fiercely howling around—when the tors are clothed in the majesty of the tempest—when the murmur of every little brook is swollen into a voice of power—when the

lightnings have unbound their "blue and arrowy pinions;" and he who dares, at that fearful hour, to confront the angry spirits of the storm in this their hereditary and undisputed strong hold, will be amply repaid for his perils by the feelings of grandeur and sublimity with which he will be impressed by the sights and sounds around him.

Dartmoor is situated towards the south-west of Devon, stretching from east-north-east to west-south-west. Its length is twenty miles, its average breadth about eleven, and it contains, according to a report lately laid on the table of the House of Commons, 130,000 acres. This large extent of country is mostly in an uncultivated state, presenting one vast expanse of hill and glen—heath and rock—torrent and morass—the aspect which it has most probably worn ever since the great deluge. The appearance of this singular district from a distance is truly picturesque. Some of the eminences recede from the eye in long unbroken ridges, but they frequently rush abruptly up, crowned with huge piles of stone, and these are called tors. During the winter the Dartmoor hills are generally enveloped in mists, but in fine weather their hue is continually changing with the state of the atmosphere, from a sombre grey to a deep azure.

Dartmoor, both above and below the surface, abounds in enormous blocks of granite; and those which are scattered on its mighty slopes, exposed to the influence of the elements and the ravages of time, are moulded into the wildest and most impressive forms imaginable. In some places they are piled on each other with a regularity which seems almost the effect of art; and it requires but very slight aid from fancy to make them assume the most interesting resemblances. The poet will picture to himself the remains of sublunary grandeur—will muse amid fallen columns and shattered arches, and sigh over the by-gone renown of fabrics which have passed away from the face of the earth, even as a flower that withereth: the antiquary will image ruined castles lifting high their tottering turrets, and crumbling abbeys with their wind-swept aisles and mouldering cloisters; or he will recognise the relics of a remoter age in the semblance of moss-grown cromlechs and other druidical monuments:—the moralist, in contemplating the rude scene, will be reminded of the awful wrecks of human ambition:—and the misanthrope will exult in the solitude of spots where he may indulge his gloomy imaginings undisturbed.

The numerous torrent-streams of the Moor are also objects of peculiar interest. To describe one of

these is to describe the whole. The reader must imagine a deep valley, or rather ravine, whose sides are covered with beetling rocks, hurled together in chaotic confusion. At the bottom of the glen foams a headlong stream sending up a loud roar as it leaps over the mis-shapen crags which oppose its passage, presenting, in association with the surrounding scenery, a picture of alpine grandeur. In truth as the country is one continued slope from the Moor to the sea, and as the beds of its torrents are so thickly strewn with rocky fragments, the waters display so many romantic combinations, that the spectator is never tired of gazing on them.

But perhaps these impetuous streams are seen to the greatest advantage where the Moor sweeps down to unite with the cultivated landscape. In some parts of the skirts of the great Devonshire wilderness, the ground is suddenly broken into deep and shadowy ravines, apparently owing their origin to some violent convulsion of nature, the mountainous elevations rushing up with a grandeur peculiarly their own, and frowning over the tumultuous waters at their feet, which, all wildness and power, hasten on to mingle with the Ocean beyond.

The struggle between barrenness and fertility in

these scenes forms a very interesting study for the lover of the picturesque. The heath-flower is blended with the honeysuckle—the fern with the fox-glove—and the dwarf oak, with its hardy boughs and stunted foliage, droops over the purple violet, or the meek blossoms of the wild strawberry. The trees are disposed in the most fantastic and irregular groupings, as if, when yellow Autumn was flinging his treasures of ripened seeds on the air, Nature, with her frolic breath, had delighted to blow them into the most inaccessible and difficult situations. The billowiness of the ground causes the existence of some delicious varieties of light and shade. A sunbeam breaking athwart the slopes of one of these singular valleys, will, perhaps, on the summit, illumine the face of a richly lichened rock—half-way down form a pathway of golden light across a dark sea of leafage—and at the bottom glance full and sparkling on the bosom of a brawling torrent. In short there is an inexpressible charm of freshness and untamed beauty connected with this species of landscape which it would be in vain to seek among the gentler haunts of cultivation.

As a specimen of this kind of scenery, and by way of conclusion to this preface, the writer has subjoined a hasty sketch of the objects which attract the notice

of tourists in journeying from Shaugh Bridge to Sheepstor.

This will be found a rugged pilgrimage, but he who is daunted by a few obstacles is not worthy of being admitted into the sanctuaries of Nature. After having quitted the bridge, we trace our difficult way through the tangled underwood which skirts the left bank of the river, and find ourselves in the midst of as wild a combination of natural objects as was ever pictured by the most romantic imagination. The surrounding hills are of a great height, and withal so irregular in their formation, that they almost resemble the billows of the ocean suddenly paralysed in one of their wildest swellings. The right bank is, however, the most grand and impressive. Its slope is one continued scene of cliff and hanging woods. Huge crumbling rocks are piled on each other in fearful array, and some are half suspended in air. At irregular distances tower several craggy knolls, composed of disjointed masses of granite hurled together in magnificent confusion, as if the Genius of earthquake had strode in wrath along the hills, and these were the traces of his mighty footsteps. The rocks are, however, every-where rendered beautiful by the magic hand of Nature, which has dashed them with lichens of a thousand hues, and hung their

shivered scalps with wreaths of the flaunting woodbine. Here and there the vagrant fancy may picture ruined donjon keeps, whose only banner is now the purple heath-bell or the gorgeously speckled fox-glove—watch-towers, whose only warder's voice is the hum of the summer bee, revelling in the cup of a drooping wild flower—and cathedral choirs, whose only anthem is the lonely chaunt of a hermit bird.

In this scene every object is enveloped with a feeling of freshness and untamed power.—The trees which spring up among the rude rocks soften down the more savage features, and by the beauty of their foliage contribute much to heighten the general effect. A volume might be filled with portraits of insulated attractions, which are unsparingly lavished on the eye. In one spot, perhaps, a rock which has borne the brunt of a thousand tempests, and yet remains proudly unmoved, uplifts its huge and craggy front; while in another situation a graceful mountain ash, apparently proud of its own sweet burden of clustering coral berries, springs lightly up on the very edge of a bushy precipice. I was forcibly struck, on my first visit to this romantic vale, by the aspect of an old oak which grows, or rather decays, on the left bank of the river, in the

midst of a wood of flourishing young trees. It rises, scathed and verdureless, above its more youthful brethren of the forest, having been shorn by axe or tempest of all its honours of branch and bough. This aged tree, standing in the midst of so much green beauty, forcibly conveys the idea of one who has out-lived the allotted time of man's pilgrimage on earth, and has grown old in the midst of a generation with which he has no connecting link of kindred or friendship.

It is sweet to wander at leisure among the grey rocks and clustering woods of this romantic glen. The observing mind needs no better haunt in which to watch over "Nature's gentle doings." Sometimes the traveller, in making his way through the pathless wood, will suddenly burst in upon some solitary bird's little world of green leaf and pleasant shade; and then it is amusing to watch the motions of the fearful warbler in being thus disturbed—first inclining his head to the right and to the left to catch the sounds of danger, and then, after having eyed the intruder with piercing attention, hopping away from twig to twig till his tiny form is lost amid the thick leafage; while, anon, the ear is saluted with the full-hearted gush of melody which he pours forth when he has reached some more secure retreat. Frequently is caught the

glistening of the timid hare's eyes as she lies watchfully couching in her ferny form—the bee is seen struggling up the stem of a bending wild flower—the much dreaded though harmless snake is beheld basking his mailed and checquered length in the thick grass; oft, too, a superb dragon-fly sweeps up from the cool margin of the stream—a living emerald—a winged star, shooting onwards, gorgeously shining in the sun, till he buries himself deep in the rich herbage. These, with a thousand other sights and sounds, are reserved for him who delights to wander “with freedom at his side” among the eloquent solitudes of nature; and such a being can never lack true gratification, for every tree—every hoary rock—every blue stream—every delicate blossom of the wilderness furnishes the mind with images to be recurred to with fondness when the anxieties of a turbulent world cast their deep shadows over the wearied spirit.

Fain would the writer, if his limits permitted, dwell minutely, and at length, on the scenery which lies on the banks of the Plym, between this spot and Meavy; but, as it is, the reader's attention must be now drawn to the glen which lies just below the secluded hamlet of Sheepstor. After having crossed the bridge above Meavy, the tourist follows a small

path which winds along the bank of the river, till he arrives at an antique farm-house, bearing over its portal the date 1617, rudely sculptured in granite. Having left this modest little dwelling, he passes up a bough-shaded lane till he perceives a gate on the left hand, from which a path turns off across a field, under a row of wild cherry-trees, leading at last into a thick copse. By following this track, he soon arrives at the brow of a hill, when he will hear the roar of waters proceeding from a deep glen before him which unites with the vale of the Plym. The wanderer should then make his way on through the tangled brushwood till he attains the bottom of the slope, when he will behold a fresh moorland brook tumbling from rock to rock down an inclined steep for full two hundred feet, wearying the surrounding echoes with hollow dashings. The leafage here is so remarkably luxuriant that the cascade is sometimes entirely hidden from the view, but it repeatedly bursts forth into the light, rendered more interesting from its temporary concealment. When the stream reaches the foot of the declivity it steals away to join the Plym, and becomes invisible, save that it now and then betrays itself in white mantlings through the dark foliage. The grouping of the trees in this spot is exceedingly fine. Here a light ash springs up with its slender stem and

bunches of delicate leaves, while there a leafless and almost branchless oak displays its huge bole and naked roots, still clinging fondly to the spot of earth which gave it being, and where it has continued for ages in proud security, while so many of the more fragile tenants of the wood have sprung into maturity and withered away. Sometimes a shady sycamore droops over the cascade, the tips of its lower branches touching the frothing waters, and dancing to and fro with a tremulous motion; and in those spots, not occupied by the larger description of trees, are beheld numerous tufts of light green hazels.

The scenery on the Plym above this spot is very fine, consisting of romantic combinations of woods and rocks, "bald with dry antiquity." One shattered mass of granite which is beheld half way up the left bank, is worthy of particular observation. It rises rifted and desolate, "the joy of the wild hawk" which here builds its nest secure from intrusion. Sheepstor bridge is soon attained, seated deep amid the shade of venerable trees, and by following the road to the right the traveller speedily arrives at the little moorland hamlet from which it takes its name. Sheepstor church is one of those quaint specimens of ancient architecture which are sometimes met with in secluded situations unmarred by the hand of modern

improvement. It is of very remote date, and stands immediately under the wild tor which bears the same name as the village. Its pinnacled tower tacitly tells the tale of many a moorland tempest, and other parts of the building bear the marks of the slow, but sure, inroads of time. The walls are encrusted with grey and yellow lichens, and young ivies insinuate their tough tendrils into the mouldering cavities. He who is fond of wandering in the cemeteries of country churches will find a rich source of pleasure by lingering in Sheepstor church-yard, when the setting sun of a calm autumnal evening has touched the massy buttresses and crumbled carved work with mellow light. A feeling of religious placidity then pervades every thing round the old building:—

It stands so quietly within the bound
Of its low wall of grey and mossy stone
And, like a shepherd's peaceful flock around
Its guardian gather'd,—graves or tombstones strown
Make *their* last narrow resting places known
Who living lov'd it as a holy spot,
And dying made their deep attachment known,
By wishing here to sleep when life was not,
So that their turf or stone might keep them unforget.*

H. E. C

PLYMOUTH, SEPTEMBER, 1826.

* Barton.



DARTMOOR.

LOVELY Devon! land of flowers and songs!
To thee the duteous lay. Thou hast a cloud
For ever in thy sky—a breeze, a shower,
For ever on thy meads;—yet where shall man,
Pursuing Spring around the globe, refresh
His eye with scenes more beauteous than adorn
Thy fields of matchless verdure! Not the south—
The glowing south—with all its azure skies,
And aromatic groves, and fruits that melt
At the rapt touch, and deep-hued flowers that light
Their tints at zenith suns—has charms like thine,
Though fresh the gale that ruffles thy wild seas,

And wafts the frequent cloud. I own the power
Of Local Sympathy that o'er the fair
Throws more divine allurements, and o'er all
The great more grandeur; and my kindling muse,
Fired by the universal passion, pours,
Haply, a partial lay. Forgive the strain
Enamoured, for to man, in every clime,
The sweetest, dearest, noblest spot below
Is that which gives him birth; and long it wears
A charm unbroken, and its honour'd name,
Hallow'd by memory, is fondly breathed
With his last lingering sigh.

O beautiful
Art thou, Devon! or when Spring awakes
The bud—the flow'r; or when the leafiness
Crowning thy hills, beneath the Summer noon
Gloriously rests; or Autumn sheds her hues
Divine: and if stern Winter rule the day,
O'er thee the monarch of the sunken year
Reigns with paternal mildness. Though his voice
Is heard majestically urging on

The loud sea storm ; and haply at his nod
Cease the sweet murmurs of the streams, as blow
Th' infrequent breezes of the biting East ;
Yet oft'ner he permits the ocean gales
To breathe on thee reviving warmth, and waft
The fertilizing shower. With welcome ray,
Though Capricorn detain the parent orb,
The sun upon thy ever-verdant fields
Delights to glance, inspiring oft the bird
To burst into a gush of song. Thy vales—
Thy Austral vales—beneath that quickening beam
Exult ; and there, in liveliest green attired,
Smiling like Hope, and cheering the glad eye,
The meek *unshelter'd* ¹ myrtle sweetly blooms.

Yet Winter, in his gentlest, kindest mood,
Is still unlovely, and his very smile
Is more forbidding than the frown of Spring.
O welcome Spring, whose still small voice is heard
E'en by the mighty tempest of the North—
Who strays amid thy empire, and feels not
Divine sensations ?—feels not life renew'd

At all its thousand fountains ? Who can bathe
His brow in thy young breezes, and not bless
The new-born impulse which gives wings to thought
And pulse to action ? But for *me* the gale
That wantons with the flower and fans the bud
Into the living leaf, and wafts around
Fragrance and health, breathes not. The bird which
sings
His touching lay of liberty and love
To thousands, sings not to my ear. The hymn
Of earth and sky—the breeze, the flower, the brook—
All sights and sounds delicious—cheering still,
From morn to eve, the blushing, vernal hour—
Are for the joyous many who can stray
At will, unshackled by the galling chain
That Fate has forged for Labour's countless sons—
A chain unbroken and unloosen'd oft
From youth to toiling age, save just to taste
How sweet a thing is liberty ;—to mark
How green the earth,—how beautiful the sky,—
How all-magnificent the sea,—and wear
The hated bonds again. On me the sun

Has seldom shone—a freeman ; free to rove
At morn, and hear the feathery nations pour
Their strains full-hearted, ere the ray has drank
The dew-drop of the vale ;—to hear the rills
In joyful tumult rush adown thy slopes
Devonia ; and with lightsome step to scale
Thy hills green-breasted, and delighted view
The infinite of prospect ;—free at noon
By fringed brooks, in meditative mood,
To rest where nothing breaks the hallow'd pause
But lapse of living waters ;—free at eve
To tread some sun-illumin'd ridge, and gaze
Enraptured on the cloud that sails the west
With hues celestial tinged, and hear the song
That bids the day farewell :—how seldom free,
Through life's dull, dreary, heartless round, at night,
Dear night !—to draw my curtain on the world,
Invoke the muse, commune with ages past,
And feast on all the luxury of books.

Yet there are precious moments, brief and bright,
As now. On ship, and fort, and tower, and tree,

The island banners float : Britannia holds
High festival to-day. The morning breaks
Upon a Holiday ; ² and never glanced
Thy ray, Apollo, on the brow of care,
With more enlivening radiance, nor flew
The Atlantic cloud upon a gale more soft
Than now salutes the cheek. Too swiftly rush
Up the red sky the coursers of the day ;
For short as beautiful are vernal morns
E'en to the listless ; but with lightning speed
They vanish from the raptured glance of him
Whom Fate too seldom gives to hail a dawn
To freedom sacred. Now the rural walk
Be mine ; but, not through soft alluring vales
I stray, where, in the balmy sunny air,
Genial as thine, Italia, ever blooms
The gentle myrtle,—and the countless brooks,
With an undying verdure fringed, roll on
Melodiously their waters. Dear Cotehele,
From thee I wander, though the beam of Spring
Is on thy venerated groves,—her breeze
Upon thy charming stream. Nor yet, to-day,

Fair Plym, I linger on thy leafy marge,
Through all the sun-bright hours.—Be mine to taste
The freshness of the moorland gale ;—’tis life
To breathe it, though it bears not on its wing
Hyblæan sweets, nor cheers the grateful brow
With the warm, fragrant and luxurious kiss
Of the soft zephyr of the vale. She loves—
Hygeia loves, the upland ridge, and sheds
Her blessings on the children of the hill ;
But far from cities and their suburbs, foul
With taint abhorr’d, the angel holds her course.

Dartmoor ! thou wert to me, in childhood’s hour,
A wild and wond’rous region. Day by day,
Arose upon my youthful eye thy belt
Of hills mysterious, shadowy, ³ clasping all
The green and cheerful landscape sweetly spread
Around my home, and with a stern delight
I gazed on thee. How often on the speech
Of the half-savage peasant have I hung
To hear of rock-crown’d heights on which the cloud
For ever rests ; and wilds stupendous, swept

By mightiest storms ;—of glen, and gorge, and cliff
Terrific, beetling o'er the stone-strew'd vale ;
And giant masses, by the midnight flash
Struck from the mountain's hissing brow, and hurl'd
Into the foaming torrent ; and of forms
That rose amid the desert, rudely shaped
By superstition's hands when time was young ;
And of the dead—the warrior-dead—who sleep
Beneath the hallow'd cairn ! My native fields,
Though peerless, ceased to please. The flowery vale,
The breezy hill, the river and the wood—
Island, reef, headland and the circling sea,
Associated by the sportful hand
Of Nature, in a thousand views diverse,
Or grand, or lovely—to my roving eye
Display'd in vain their infinite of charms :
I thought on thy wild world,—to me a world,—
Mysterious Dartmoor, dimly seen, and priz'd
For being distant and untrod ; and still,
Where'er I wander'd—still, my wayward eye
Rested on thee !

In sunlight and in shade,—
Repose and storm,—wide waste ! I since have trod
Thy hill and dale magnificent. Again
I seek thy solitudes profound, in this
Thy hour of deep tranquillity, when rests
The sun-beam on thee, and thy desert seems
To sleep in the unwonted brightness—calm
But stern:—for, though the spirit of the Spring
Breathes on thee, to the charmer's whisper kind
Thou listenest not, nor ever puttest on
A robe of beauty, as the fields that bud
And blossom near thee. Yet I love to tread
Thy central wastes when not a sound intrudes
Upon the ear, but rush of wing, or leap
Of the hoarse waterfall. ⁴ And O 'tis sweet
To list the music of thy torrent-streams ;
For thou too hast thy minstrelsies for him
Who from their liberal mountain-urn delights
To trace thy waters, as from source to sea
They rush tumultuous. Yet for other fields
Thy bounty flows eternal. From thy sides
Devonia's rivers flow ; a thousand brooks ⁵

Roll o'er thy rugged slopes ;—tis but to cheer
Yon Austral meads unrivall'd, fair as aught
That bards have sung, or Fancy has conceived
'Mid all her rich imaginings. Whilst thou,
The source of half their beauty, wearest still,
Through centuries, upon thy blasted brow,
The curse of barrenness.

Devoted Moor !

The sun has shone with generous warmth on thee,
The cloud has dropp'd its fatness, and the gale—
The vernal gale—has blown ; yet thou hast been
Unchangeable, unquicken'd, while around
A blooming world has waked and grateful own'd
The bounty of the skies. Thy rugged hills
Have seldom echo'd with the peasant's voice,
Inspiring his patient team,—the song
Of industry and hope. The magic hand
Of Cultivation⁶ has beyond thee spread
The cheerful cultured field, and bade the woods
Luxuriantly arise, and harvests wave,
And cross'd the landscape with unnumber'd lines

Of foliage, sheltering deep the smiling meads
And conscious herds, sweet scatter'd there, secure
Alike from wintry blast, or scorching ray ;
But o'er thy deso'ate and naked heath
Sweeps not the impenetrable guardian fence—
The hedge-row, with its wild and wanton growth—
Hazel, or snowy hawthorn, interspersed
With the broad-spreading oak, or lofty elm,
Or holly, pointing to the moorland storm
Its hardy, fearless leaf.

The future beams
With hope's inspiring ray. Beneath the boughs
Of violated groves, where nought was heard
But the rich woodland song, or voice of rill ;—
Through pastures of unrivall'd green, and fields
Where golden harvests gracefully obey'd
The passing breeze of Summer ;—through the rock
Of ages, hills abrupt, and caverns deep,
The Railway leads its mazy track. ⁷ The will
Of Science guides its vast meanders on,
From Plym's broad union with the ocean wave

To Dartmoor's silent desert ; and the depths
Of solitudes primeval now resound
With the glad voice of man. The dauntless grasp
Of Industry assails yon mighty Tors⁸
Of the dread wilderness, and soon they lift
Their awful heads no more. Ye rose sublime—
Ye monuments of the past world,—ye rose
Sublimely on the view ; but fate has struck
The inexorable hour, and ye that bore—
Wild and unshelter'd as ye are—unmov'd,
The brunts of many thousand stormy years,
And awed the mind by your majestic forms,
And told strange tales of the departed times,
Must bend your hoary brows, and strew the hills
With venerable ruin. Yet how great
The toil, if Labour from the tor-crown'd hills
Collect within his nervous grasp the rocks
That baffled the eternal winds, and bid
The cheerful sward upspring, and songs awake,
And Ceres reign, where silence, deep as death,
And stern sterility, from age to age,
Held unrelenting sway !

The civic wreath,
Tyrwhitt, is thine, ⁹ distinguish'd 'mid the band
Of British patriots, glowing with the love
Of country and of man. The noble thought
Was thine, to rescue from the withering hand
Of Desolation, the vast waste ; so long
“ A proverb and a bye-word ” in this isle
Of beauty,—this famed isle,—her children's boast
And envy of the nations ! Nor in vain
Th' attempt, for Enterprise and Science, led
By thee, their mighty energies combine
Auspicious. Lo, along the iron-way
The rocks gigantic slide ! The peasant views,
Amazed, the masses of the wild moor move
Swift to the destined port. The busy pier
Groans 'neath the granite spoils ;—the future pile
Is there,—the portal vast—the column tall—
The tower—the temple—and the mighty arch
That yet shall span the torrent. See the sail
Of Commerce flutters near, 'till patient skill
And dauntless toil prepare the polish'd cubes

Immense, that soon shall form the proudest domes
Of yonder proud metropolis !

The muse

Awakes a sanguine strain ;—on Fancy's gaze
Delicious visions rise ! “ The wilderness,”
No longer rock-strew'd, “ blossoms as the rose.”
A thousand cots, fair sprinkled o'er the sward,
Where the old desert howl'd, delight the eye ;—
The smoke upcurls between the trees ;—the fields,
High cultured, spread around ;—the flow'r-fringed
streams

Melodious roll ;—the merry woodland wakes
Its varied lay enchanting ;—while the voice
Of Man is heard amid the general burst
Of soul-inspiring sounds. And why should doubt
Dispel these fond imaginings, and blast
The fair prospective ? Yet the happy hour
May come—nor distant—when the conqu'ring swain
Shall furrow the long slumb'ring soil, and where
Frowns Desolation, bid the cheerful grass

Wave in the upland gale, and harvests bless
The renovated waste. Achievements these,
O nobler far than gloriously to win
A blood-stain'd realm, though ravish'd, inch by inch,
From a stern sullen foe. And in this day,
When wide the sun of Science flings its beams,
And Wealth her liberal fertilizing showers
Diffuses ; and undaunted Industry,
All nerve, but waits, impell'd by them, to work
Such wonders as in days long flown and dark
Had miracles been deem'd ; shalt thou—alone—
Dartmoor—in this fair land, where all beside
Is life and beauty—sleep the sleep of death,
And shame the map of England ?

Years have flown
Of sorrow, since my raptured boyish eye
First, from this murm'ring strand, an eager glance
Threw o'er yon lucid waters ;—years have flown
Sweet Lara, ¹⁰ yet thy bank uprushes still
With the old charm, and Saltram's pensile woods
Seem beautiful as ever. Exquisite—

Most exquisite ! that loveliness must be,
Which triumphs o'er satiety, and grows
More valued from possession. Let me stray
A moment here delighted. Every step
Awakes a varying scene, by Nature's hand
Fair sketch'd, of leaf-crown'd hills, and flowery vales,
And lawns of fadeless emerald, and streams
That, as they flow, upon the well-pleased ear,
Pour music ; and green capes that to the wave,
Blue as the heavens above it, nod their groves
In gales Atlantic ; and far—far away
Th' immense of landscape sweeping to the edge
Of the encircling Moor. But on those groves
Of Saltram rests the eye, which fringe thy flood,
Sweet Lara ;—beauteous groves !—whose verdant
bowers

Bend o'er the wanderer, lone musing where
The path, deep-shaded, winds the rocky shore.
And pleasant 'tis, amid the glowing noon,
To saunter there, unmark'd, and note below,
Curving his proud white neck, the graceful swan,
Majestic sailing,—or the distant barge

Slow moving,—or the sea-bird winging wild
His startl'd flight ; while, ever and anon,
Between the opening foliage, glimpses fair
Are caught of the green slopes beyond. Around
Old Ocean pours his tide, high swelling now
To meet the sylvan Plym, ¹¹ that rushing comes—
His moorland, woodland journey done—to seek
The proud alliance. And, where lift the rocks
Their brows stupendous o'er the broad'ning bay,
The seaman's shout is heard, and Commerce waves
In every gale her many-colour'd flag.

Farewell, sweet Lara !—far away I rove
Through Bickleigh's vale romantic, where the lyre
Of Howard once, with rich enthusiast strain,
Rang to the list'ning woods. And he who loves
To steal from yonder world, and stray awhile,
With freedom at his side, as from the marge
Of sweetly-warbling waters rise the groves,
Tree over tree, in verdant pomp, until
They reach the hill's bold crest—O dearest Plym,
Thou pilgrim of the upland and the dale !—

Let him, as pass the hours on golden wing,
In happy indolence, upon thy bank
Recline, deep shelter'd from the ray, to list
Thy melodies enchanting; or the hymn
Most sweet of the wild bird, as bank to bank
In music speaks; or, with unwearied step,
O'er rock and sward, fair interspers'd, pursue,
Through the rude moorland—through the sylvan
mead—

Thy bright meanderings. And when the world
Again shall claim him, shuddering at its strifes
And cares distressing; and unnumber'd woes
Awake the sigh, and memory recall,
With garrulous fidelity, the sum
Of life's few sun-bright moments, gone for aye,
Yet prized and dearly cherish'd; on his view
Shall swiftly rush those hours transporting, when,
Dear mountain stream, he linger'd here with thee.

How fortunate his lot who, bless'd with health
And competence, can bid the bustling world
At happy distance keep!—who rears his cot

Deep in the rural shade, and wreathes around
His lattice the rath woodbine ! On his couch
The piercing eye of the uprisen sun
Ne'er looks reprovingly ; but when the lark
Hails the bright bursting morn, he, to that voice
Responsive, lifts his own heart-easing song
Of gratitude and joy. The bud, emboss'd
With gems that never sparkle on the eye
Of indolence—the freshen'd field—the bloom
That scents the zephyr, and the first caress
Of morning's beam to flowers—the early voice
Of streams clear sounding in the peaceful dawn—
All, all are his ;—and his the merry lay
Of the unslumbering woodlands. Deepening noon,
Intensely glowing o'er a drooping world,
He shuns, and seeks the refuge cool of groves ;
Where often, on the green and shadowy sward
Reclin'd, through all the silent hour, he holds
High converse with the muse. And evening comes,
With all her lovely hues and sounds, to woo
The wanderer to the breezy brow that looks
Far o'er the soften'd landscape. Rivers, woods,

And all the infinite of smiling fields,
Rush on his eager glance. Then pour the groves
Their farewell strains harmonious, as sinks
The sun to other worlds ; but chief the lark,
From his bright station in the midway air,
Eyes fondly the declining orb, and pours
A matchless vesper hymn. O days of bliss !
O eves of rapture ! Nights of deep repose !
Ye bless him who in his unfaltering course,
Amid the sylvan reign, with virtue walks,
On Nature looks with ravis'hd eye—nor lives
With selfish aim, contented to behold,
Alone, her charms in his own blushing bower ;
But, as the varying seasons gently roll,
In works of pure benevolence employs
The hours, till round him one wide circle sweeps
Of human happiness, enlarging still,
From that blest centre, his own sacred Home.

The scene how chang'd !—I leave the sunny vale,
Its foliage, flowers, and songs, and tread the heath,
And breathe the breeze of Roborough. ¹² In peace

Thy hamlet rises, Meavy, distant seen,—
In peace thy stream is journeying ; but adieu,
Awhile, dear Meavy, and adieu thy flood,
For near me, in the cheerless East uprush
Devonia's dreary Alps. E'en here I feel
The influence of that impressive calm
Which rests upon them. Nothing that has life
Is visible ;—no solitary flock,
At will wide ranging through the silent Moor,
Breaks the deep felt monotony ; and all
Is motionless, save where the giant shades,
Flung by the passing cloud, glide slowly o'er
The gray and gloomy wild. With pensive step,
Delay'd full oft to mark thy lovely meads,
Walkhampton, I ascend the toiling hill,
And now upon thy wind-swept ridge I stand ;
The South—the West—with all their million fields
In sweet confusion mingl'd—lie below,—
Above me frowns the 'Tor.

Majestic pile—

Thus, through the dreary flight of ages, thus

Triumphant o'er decay ! Art not thou old
As the aged Sun, and did not his first beam
Glance on thy new-form'd forehead ; or art thou
But born of the deluge mighty one ? Thy birth
Is blended with the unfathomable past,
And shadows deep—too deep for mortal eye—
Envelope it. With reverence I gaze
Upon thy awful form, to which compar'd
Our proudest works are toys. O ! vain is man,
Though loud on Science' magic name he call,
To rear his edifice of glory high,
And bid it live for ever. Time destroys
His statues, and his columns, and his domes ;
Flings his triumphal arches to the ground,
And gnaws the names of heroes and of kings,
E'en from the marble tablet. Earth is strew'd,
O Man, with many a solitary wreck
Of all thy great and beautiful ! In dust
She sits—the classic city sits,—the name
Dear to the muses ! Who can think of thee
Athenæ, and not drop the indignant tear,*

* This was written when the Turks were in possession of Athens.

As roam the dull barbaric hosts among
Thy glorious ruins, with unhallow'd step
And desolating arm ? Thy hour is past ;—
Thy noblest piles are mouldering o'er the bones
Of the immortal dead ; while here, unhurt—
Wed almost to eternity—secure
In their own strength, proud baffling all the rage
Of the defeated elements, and all
The ceaseless injuries of time—remain
The columns of the wilderness !

Wild Tor !

Thou wearest not thy crown of clouds—the beam
Of heaven is on thee now ; and, from thy crest
Sublime, I mark Devon's garden-fields,
In native loveliness, stretch far away,
E'en to the Austral strand ; and, clear descried,
Cornubia too her beauteous map outspreads,
Rich with the vernal promise of the year ;
While Tamar flows between them, wand'ring on
To Hamoaze' echoing bay ;—a matchless view,

O'er which the winged glance may freely dart,
Untir'd, through all the cloudless summer day.

With what delightful change the landscape teems
To him who o'er the West—the billowy West—
Pursues his varied way ! He scales its hills,
He drinks its upland breeze, or winds its vales
Where glide the chrystal streams ; and as the sward,
Luxuriant round him, to the very verge
Of the horizon, sinks and swells, like waves
Heav'd by the tempest, every moment rise
Fresh combinations ; and the liberal hand
Of Nature often on his cheerful course
Flings an attractive novelty of scene.

Fair is thy level landscape, England, fair
As ever Nature form'd ! Away it sweeps,
A wide, a smiling prospect, gay with flowers,
And waving grass, and trees of amplest growth,
And sparkling rills, and rivers winding slow
Through all the smooth immense. Upon the eye

Arise the village and the village-spire,
The clustering hamlet, and the peaceful cot
Clasp'd by the woodbine, and the lordly dome,
Proud peering 'mid the stately oak and elm
Leaf-loving. Sweet the frequent lapse of brook,
The poetry of groves, the voice of bells
From aged towers, and labour's manly song
From cultur'd fields upswelling. Sweet the hues
Of all the fertile land; and when the sun
And shower alternate empire hold, how fresh,
How gay, how all enchanting to the view,
Beheld at first, the broad champaign appears!

Fair is thy level landscape, England, fair
As ever Nature form'd! yet, if the foot
Be doom'd to wander o'er the encircling plain
From hour to hour, the eye, displeas'd, rejects
At last the gay monotony. In vain,
Though boundless verdure edge his far-seen path,
The traveller looks for interposing hills
To break the unvarying view. Behind—before—
The dull road drags its weary tedious line

Through all the cheerless map. But swift the hour,
And smooth the path, where every step awakes
Associations new ;—of mounts that lift
Their woods to the passing cloud, and sweetly dip
Their feet in grassy billows ; vallies deep,
Down which the eager eye delighted darts,
And at one glance their trees, and cots, and streams
Surveys ; and shadowy glens, and cliff, and rock,
And waterfall, and ocean's whitening surge
Far off—a rich diversity that charms
The traveller's cares away, and wings the hour
With lightning speed ;—scenes like thine own, and
these

So near me, loved Devonian !

From yon plain
Brent Tor uprushes. ¹³ Even now, when all
Is light, and life, and joy, on Tamar's bank—
E'en now that solitary mass is dark,—
Dark in the glorious sunshine. But when night
With raven wing broods o'er it, and the storm
Of winter sweeps the Moor, such sounds are heard

Around that lonely rock, as village seers
Almost unearthly deem. In truth it wears
A joyless aspect ; yet the very brow
Uplifts a chapel, and Devotion breathes
Oft, in the region of the cloud, her hymn
Of touching melody. Impressive spot
For fair Religion's dome ! and sure, if aught
Can prompt to holiest feeling, and give wing
To disembodied thought, it is to bend
The knee where erst the daring eagle perch'd ;
And while, with all its grossness and its care,
Earth waits, far, far below, to worship there,—
There on the wild van of the wildest rock
That Dartmoor lifts on high !

Thrice hallow'd fane !

The pious gift (so village legends teach)
Of one whom heaven had favour'd in his need,—
His utmost need. In youth's impetuous hour
Mercator bade his native isle adieu,
For climes afar, where 'neath the despot sun
All nature crouches. There the tide of wealth

Profusely pour'd around him till it reach'd
A glorious height ; and but one wish was left
Ungratified. In early life, allur'd
By splendid visions, oft we spurn the strand
That gave us birth, but homeward,—homeward look
In life's declining day ; and, though the stream
Of riches lavish flow, it may not quench
The Local flame devouring. Long suppress'd
Within Mercator's bosom, now the Love
Of Home intensely glow'd, and oft he sigh'd
To breathe his country's gale, and oh, blest thought,
To press his native turf ! Upon the wing
Of the fleet wind his vessel sped, nor yet
To his delighted gaze the green isle shew'd
Her western cliffs magnificent. O stern
Though these arise where seas Atlantic dash
Around the dark Bolerium, many an eye
Has watch'd intense, and bless'd them, as the shout
Of " England, England," from the bending mast
Thrill'd to the echoing deck. But ah, in vain
Mercator o'er the world of waters flung
A keen and frequent glance, as near the shore

He fondly deem'd they drew. Land bless'd not yet
His aching sight ;—th' inconstant winds flew round
The stormy compass, and one pensive eve
The clouds were pillow'd in the gloomy West
E'en to the starless zenith. Larger roll'd
The billows, and with hollow sounds the breeze
Blew, and the sea-bird ominously scream'd,
While the day closed abruptly. Light and Hope
Almost together fled, and darkness, deep
As that which o'er the primal chaos sat,
Involv'd that hapless ship ; save when the fires
Of the fork'd lightnings flash'd, disclosing all
The horrors of the main. The winds arose,
Scattering the sea-foam on the dread lee shore ;
Now heard loud thundering through that fearful
 night,
Chilling the heart-blood of the bravest. Then,
As bent the timbers of his stout ribb'd bark
To the huge ocean-shock, and wave on wave
Dash'd on the staggering deck, the sufferer vow'd,
In silent agony, that if the ear
Of Heaven would listen, and its arm be strong

To save,—upon the first dear spot of earth
Propitious morning shew'd, he would erect
A temple to the Highest. It was heard,—
(Thus swains relate) the anguish'd vow was heard—
Propitious broke the dawn. The winds no more
Swept o'er the madden'd waters, and the voice
Of the great sea-wave died away ; scarce heard
Save where the billow chaf'd the strand and made
Sweet music with the rocks. The welcome Sun,
Chasing the tempest, in the brightening East
Victorious rose, and through the scatter'd haze
Brent Tor uplifted his magnific brow,
With shouts tumultuous hail'd ! How ever dear
To memory that rugged form,—how fair
The sun-light of that morn ! Now, as the ray
Glitter'd on wave, and cliff, and fort, and tower,
And the green isle, refresh'd, beneath the smile
Of morning broke upon the view, and shew'd
To the tired mariner her hills and dales
Unrival'd, buoyantly that shattered bark
Rode o'er the wanton seas ; and 'mid the songs
Of woods—fair woods, that on Devon's shores

Arise, and wave their leaf in balmiest gales
Of the moist West, and ever'-genial South,
All dangers o'er—by many a welcome cheer'd,
Mercator found a harbour and a home.

Adieu, Brent Tor, adown the rock-strew'd slope
I haste, and seek the bosom of the Moor,
Before me wildly spread. Here Spring leaves not
Her emerald mantle on the vales,—her breath
Upon the breeze, but all the seasons pass
In sad procession o'er the changeless earth :
The hills arise monotonous ;—one form
They wear, one dreary hue is on them all ;
And through the faithless dank morass below
The sluggish waters creep. Yet even here
The voice of joy resounds! The moorland lark,—
Sole bird that breaks the unnatural repose,—
Springs from the heathery wild and pours a lay
Inspiring ; and though o'er his breeze-swept nest
There bends no cheerful grass, nor in the gale
Of Summer stoops the golden corn, he owns
The influence of the vernal hour, and makes

Heaven's concave echo with a livelier song
Than swells above the flowery mead. Behold
How swiftly up the aerial way he climbs,
Nor intermits his strains, but sings, and mounts,
Untir'd, till love recall him to the breast
Of the dark Moor. O dear to him that Moor
Beyond the most luxuriant spot which earth
Boasts in her ample round ; for there his mate,
List'ning his lay, expectant sits, and there,
From morn to eve incessant, claiming food,
In mossy circle swath'd, his nurslings rest !

How beautiful is morning, though it rise
Upon a desert ! What though Spring refuse
Her odours to the early gale that sweeps
The highland solitude, yet who can breathe
That fresh, keen gale, nor feel the sanguine tide
Of life flow buoyantly ! O who can look
Upon the Sun whose beam indulgent shines
Impartial, or on moor or cultur'd mead,
And not feel gladness ! Hard is that man's lot,
Bleak is his journey through this vale of tears,

Whose heart is not made lighter, and whose eye
Is brighten'd not by morning's glorious ray,
Wide-glancing round. The meanest thing on earth
Rejoices in the welcome warmth, and owns
Its influence reviving. Hark the hum
Of one who loves the morn,—the bee who comes,
With overflow of happiness, to spend
The sunny hour; and see! across the waste
The butterfly, his gay companion, floats,—
A wanderer, haply, from yon Austral fields,
Or from the bank of moorland stream that flows
In music through the deep and shelter'd vales.

Bird, bee, and butterfly,—the favourite three
That meet us ever on our Summer path!
And what, with all her forms and hues divine,
Would Summer be without them? Though the skies
Were blue, and blue the streams, and fresh the fields,
And beautiful, as now, the waving woods,
And exquisite the flowers; and though the Sun
Beam'd from his cloudless throne from day to day,
And, with the breeze and shower, more loveliness

Shed o'er this lovely world ; yet all would want
A charm, if those sweet denizens of earth
And air, made not the great creation teem
With beauty, grace and motion ! Who would bless
The landscape, if upon his morning walk
He greeted not the feathery nations, perch'd,
For love or song, amid the dancing leaves ;
Or wantoning in flight from bough to bough,
From field to field ; ah, who would bless thee, June,
If silent, songless, were the groves,—unheard
The lark in heaven ?—And he who meets the bee
Rifling the bloom, and listless hears his hum,
Incessant ringing through the glowing day ;
Or loves not the gay butterfly which swims
Before him in the ardent noon, array'd
In crimson, azure, emerald, and gold ;
With more magnificence upon his wing—
His little wing,—than ever graced the robe
Gorgeous of royalty ;—is like the kine
That wander 'mid the flowers which gem the meads
Unconscious of their beauty.

On my path
Profusely springs *Eríca*.¹⁴ Pensive plant !
On thee with no kind glance the peasant's eye
Descends ; he sees no loveliness in all
Thy summer-vesture, and his arm is strong
To dash thy blossoms to the earth, and wrench
Thy root tenacious from its parent soil.
Yet, though the unsparing cultivator's hand
Crushes the lowly flow'rets of the Moor,
How many a vagrant wing light waves around
Thy purple bells, *Eríca*. 'Tis from thee
The hermit-birds, that love the desert, find
Shelter and food. Nor these alone delight
In the fresh heath,—thy gallant mountaineers,
Auld Scotia, smile to see it spread immense
O'er their uncultur'd hills ; and at the close
Of the keen boreal day, th' undaunted race
Contented on the rude *Eríca* sink
To balmy sleep. O ye, on beds of down,
Who rest so delicately that ye feel
Pain from the doubling rose leaf, like the old
Luxurious Sybarite ; not half so soft,—

So deep,—steals courted slumber on your eyes,
As all unsought, unwoo'd, it drops at once
On the rude highland pillow of the North.

How strangely on yon silent slopes the rocks
Are piled, and as I musing stray they take
Successive forms deceptive. Sun, and shower,
And breeze, and storm, and, haply, ancient throes
Of this our mother earth, have moulded them
To shapes of beauty and of grandeur—thus;
And Fancy, all-creative, musters up
Apt semblances. Upon the very edge
Of yonder cliff seem, frowning o'er the vale,
Time-hallow'd battlements with rugged chasms
Fearfully yawning; and upon the brow
Of yonder dreary hill are towers sublime,
Rifted as by the lightning stroke, or struck
By war's resistless bolts. The mouldering arch,—
The long withdrawing aisle,—the shatter'd shrine,—
The altar gray with age,—the sainted niche,—
The choir, breeze-swept, where once the solemn
hymn

Upswell'd,—the tottering column,—pile on pile
Fantastic,—the imagination shapes
Amid these wrecks enormous. But 'tis o'er—
The dream is o'er, and reason dissipates
The fair illusions. Yet in truth ye wear,
Rocks of the desert, forms that on the eye
In solemn and imposing grandeur rise !
And even now, though near, the mountain seems
Strew'd with innumerable fragments, as when Fate
Mysterious, in some unexpected hour,
Inexorably casts, at one fell blow,
Fenc'd cities into ruinous heaps. O'er all,
The rude but many-colour'd lichen creeps ;
And on the airy summit of yon hill,
Clasping the Tor's majestic brow, is seen
The dark funereal ivy, cheerless plant !
Which Death and Desolation wreath around
Their haggard brows for ever.

'Tis the haunt,
The home of the wild bird. That savage eye,
Which makes the desert tremble, has discern'd

The intruder, Man ;—my footfall has alarm'd
The tyrant Falcon. How the free-born bird,
Jealous of liberty, unus'd to fear
The arm of the invader, wheels around
His native cliff, whence from the topmost crag
Depends his nest ;—or circles the old Tor,
Where once the moorland eagle soar'd sublime,
Sole monarch of the forest. Far away,
Anon, with lightning wing he darts, or floats
Pois'd in mid air, or, with triumphant rush,
Sweeps by his enemy, and, screaming hoarse,
Bursts down the vale indignant.

Silent now,—

How silent that proud pile where England held
Within her victor-gripe the vanquish'd foe ! ¹⁵
O here full many a blooming cheek was blench'd,
O here full many a gallant heart was quell'd
By stern captivity ; protracted till
Hope almost ceased to bless the drooping brave !
At eve the exile stretch'd him on his couch,
And, while the tear stood trembling in his eye,

As night fell on him, thoughts of Home awoke
The bitter unregarded sigh. To him
Sweet spring no pleasure brought ;—the summer ray
Gilded the waste in vain ; and when the deep
And ruthless winter capp'd the cloud-wreath'd Tor
With snow, and loud the highland tempest howl'd,
He heard and shudder'd. Yet a desperate race,
Men of all climes,—attach'd to none,—were here,
Rude mingled with the hero who had fought,
By freedom fir'd, for his beloved France.
And these, as volatile as bold, defied
Intrusive thought, and flung it to the gale
That whistled round them. Madd'ning dance and
song—

The jest obscenc, the eager bet, the dice
Eventful ;—these, and thousand more, devis'd
To kill the hours, fill'd up the varied day :
And when the moorland evening o'er them clos'd,
On easy pillow slept the careless throng,
To run to-morrow the eternal round
Of reckless mirth, and on invention call
For ceaseless novelty.

And others woo'd
The muses, and with soothing song beguil'd
The leaden moments. Harp on harp was heard,
Of sweetest melody ; and some pursued
Severest lore, and follow'd with firm step
Thee Science—thee Philosophy—and gave
The hours to Wisdom. Of this sacred band
Had young Augustin been, but o'er his youth
Misfortune's blight had pass'd ;—the roseate bloom
Had vanish'd from his cheek, and Hope, dear Hope,
That spring dew of existence, cheer'd no more
The soul, and withering consumption now
Drank the life-blood by drops !

How beautiful
The vernal hour of life. Then pleasure wings
With lightning-speed the moments, and the sun
Beams brightly, and nor cloud nor storm appears
To darken the horizon. Hope looks out
Into the dazzling sheen, and fondly talks
Of summer ; and Love comes, and all the air
Rings with wild harmonies. But songs may cease,

Though caroll'd in the faithless spring, and Hope
May prove a flatterer, and Love may plume
His wing for flight, and every flower that blows
Be blasted by the tempest's breath.

And thus

It far'd with young Augustin, and he sank
Before the death-blight, just as his green years
Were gliding into summer beauty. Long
He woo'd a maid all innocence and truth,
And lovely as the loveliest nymph that treads
Thy banks, swift-rushing Rhone. And she return'd
His passionate suit, and every day that came
Strengthen'd th' indissoluble charm that wound
Itself round their young hearts. Thy skies are blue,
Fair Provence, and thy streams are clear and fring'd
By the lush vine, that in thy quiet vales
Hangs out its full frank clusters, glowing deep
With richest amethystine tint ; and thou
Hast songs of witching minstrelsy from bowers
Of fragrance ; and, amid the deepening shade
Of groves, sweet cots—abodes of health and peace,

By woodbine, rose, and myrtle sweetly deck'd.
But Love has power to fling an added charm
E'en on the beautiful; and when these met,
At magic eve, the soft, the sunny South
Yet more enchanting seem'd;—the hills, the vales
Wore an unearthly charm;—the crystal streams
Roll'd on with new-born minstrelsies;—the woods
Were greener, fairer, and this world arose
To their quick-beaming and delighted eyes,
With all the hues and forms of Paradise.

But Revolution from her wild trump blew
A loud and fearful blast; and at the sound
The nations trembled, and the land—the sea—
Were one wide scene of tumult. 'Neath the shade
Of vine, fig, olive, now no more the swain
Repos'd in happy indolence! No more
Sweet tales of love in rose and myrtle bowers!
For France, with fiercest call, from loom and plough,
From hill and vale, city and cot, arous'd
Her sons to conflict; and Augustin, torn
From her he lov'd,—the weeping Genevieve,—

Was sent, with many a hapless victim more,
To combat England on the wave. Awhile,
The bark that bore him from his native strand,
Successful roam'd ; but 'cross her ocean-path
An English frigate swept, and soon the flag
Of fierce Democracy, deep-humbled, wav'd
Beneath the British banner !.

“ Farewell, France ! ”

The captive sigh'd, as for the gentle breeze
Of balmy Provence, loudly round him howl'd
The chill, moist gale of Dartmoor ! Where are now
The blushing bowers, the groves with fruitage hung
Voluptuous,—the music of the bough
From birds that love bright climes,—the perfum'd
morn—

The golden day,—the visionary eve,—
The walk—the interchange of soul—too well—
Too well remember'd ? Exile, think no more ;
There's madness in the cup that memory holds
To thy inebriate lip !

Yet rise they will,—

Dear visions of thy home. The birds will sing,—
The streams will flow,—the grass will wave,—the
flowers

Will bloom,—and through the leafage of the wood
The blue smoke curl ; thy cot is there,—thy cot—
Poor exile ; and the secret mighty power,
The Local Love, that o'er the wide spread earth
Binds man to one dear, cherish'd, sacred spot,
His Home, is with thy spirit ; and will oft
Throw round its dear enchantments, and awake,
For distant scenes belov'd, the deep-felt sigh,
And prompt the unbidden tear !

O ! who that drags
A captive's chain, would feel his soul refresh'd,
Though scenes like those of Eden should arise
Around his hated cage ! But here green youth
Lost all its freshness, manhood all its prime,
And age sank to the tomb, ere peace her trump
Exulting blew ; and still upon the eye,

In dread monotony, at morn, noon, eve,
Arose the Moor—the Moor !

And year on year
Thus crept away, spent in consuming thought ;—
But now terrific rumours reach'd his ear
Of fierce commotions, insurrections, feuds
Intestine, making Home, Aceldama ;
Till at the last came, crushing all his hopes,
A withering tale. “ O Liberty, what crimes
Were perpetrated in thy glorious name,” *
In that devoted land, when Faction strode
O'er wreck of throne and tribune to the heights
Of lawless brief dominion ! Perish'd then,
In undistinguish'd massacre, the brave,
The wise, the good, the fair, beneath the fangs
Of Revolution's hell-hounds. Vaunted France,
The gallant, the frank-hearted, and the gay,
Where lovely “ Woman as a Deity
Had long been worshipp'd,” in that fearful hour

* Madame Roland.

Threw off its ancient homage. Men became
Brutal—infuriate ;—from the scaffold thrill'd
The female shriek ; and (O eternal shame
To France !) within the deep and gulphing wave
They sank, all wildly mix'd, the son, the sire,
The mother, and the gentle virgin—all,
In one dark watery grave !

And she was one—
The hapless Genevieve,—on whom the surge
Had thus untimely clos'd ! Her lover heard,—
Silently, sternly, heard the blasting tale,
And wept not ;—never more refreshing tear
Moisten'd his eye-lid, and with desperate zeal
He nourish'd his despair, till on his heart
The vulture of consumption gnaw'd !

He sleeps
Beneath yon hillock ;—not a stone records
Where poor Augustin rests : yet there is one
Who knows the spot, and often turns aside,

Lone wand'ring o'er the bleak and silent Moor,
To view the stranger's grave !

But see, on high
Tor Royal lifts its brow. The guardian fence
Is there, the piny grove, that from the blasts
Of winter guards the herbage of the hill,
When all beneath is shrinking from the rage
Of the fierce blighting storm. How sweetly blooms
Upon the slopes the azure-blossom'd Flax ! 16
How wave the grassy seas of shelter'd fields,
Triumphant o'er the solitudes around,
Less happy, where the cultivator's hand,
Creating, comes not. If to him belongs
The name of benefactor of mankind,
"Who makes two blades of cheerful grass to grow
Where but one grew before," what meed is thine,
Tyrwhitt, who for the unprofitable heath,
The lichen, and the worthless moss, that erst
Crept o'er the hill, hast round thy highland home,
A belt of generous verdure thrown, and bade
(What wonders may not Enterprise achieve ?)

A sweet oasis in the desert rise
Upon the traveller's admiring eye ?

Nor waving crops, nor leaf, nor flowers adorn
Thy sides, deserted Crockern. '7 Over thee
The winds have ever held dominion ; thou
Art still their heritage, and fierce they sweep
Thy solitary hill what time the storm
Howls o'er the shrinking Moor. The scowling gales
This moment slumber, and a dreary calm
Prevails—the calm of Death ;—the listless eye
Turns from thy utter loneliness. Yet man,
In days long flown, upon the mount's high crest
Has brav'd the highland gale, and made the rocks
Re-echo with his voice. Not always thus
Has hover'd, Crockern, o'er thy leafless scalp,
The silence and the solitude that now
Oppresses the crush'd spirit ; for I stand
Where once the fathers of the forest held
(An iron-race) the Parliament that gave
The forest, law. Ye legislators, nurs'd
In lap of modern luxury, revere

The venerable spot, where, simply clad
And breathing mountain breezes, sternly sat
The hardy mountain council. O'er them bent
No other dome but that in which the cloud
Sails—the blue dome of heaven. The ivy hung
Its festoons round the 'Tor, and at the foot
Of that rude fabric—pil'd by nature—bloom'd
The heath-flower. Still the naked hill uprears,
Sublime, its granite pyramid, and while
The statue, and the column, and the fane
Superb, the boast of Man, in fairer climes,
Crockern, than thine, have strew'd the groaning earth
With beauteous ruin,—the enduring Tor,
Baffling the elements and fate, remains—
Claiming our reverence—that proudly tower'd
Of old, above the senate of the Moor.

How deep the silence that prevails around !
'Tis noon, all-conquering noon ! The songs that hail
The merry morn are seldom heard beneath
The beam meridian. E'en the lyric lark
Suspends his heavenly lay, the vagrant bee

His lowly hum. There is nor chirp, nor song,
Nor rush of stream, nor leap of waterfall,
Nor cry of the fierce hawk, nor flow of rill,
To break the oppressive pause. I pass between
The granite masses that bestrew the wild,
And gaze on each huge eminence that rears
Its rude-pil'd tor to heaven ; and deeply feel
How on the traveller's soul thy calm profound
Must fall, Palmyra, as, with awe-struck eye,
He views thy lonely desolations ;—views
The pillars of the wilderness arise
Above the desert-sand. With ruthless blow
The hand of fate has struck thee ; but how fair
Thy aspect once, to be so beautiful
Amid dishonour ! Earth through all her realms
Holds not a wreck more noble. Where are now
Thy glorious builders—mighty names, when time
Was young and vigorous ? Upon them rests
Impenetrable gloom, but they have left
Illustrious memorials that excite
Men's wonder still,—in these—the boasted days
Of an enlighten'd world !

The Moor owns not

The proud Corinthian colonnade, superb
In ruin—nor the mould'ring temple, still
The wonder of the nations ; but e'en here
Man, rude untutor'd man, has liv'd and left
Rough traces of existence. Let me pause
Around these roofless huts, these feeble walls, ¹⁸
Thus solitary, thus decay'd, amid
The silent flight of ages. In these, once,
The fierce Danmonii dwelt. With filial awe,
I tread where erst my brave fore-fathers stood,—
Where now they sleep ! Ye thoughts of other days
How swiftly do ye crowd upon the soul !
These silent vales have swarm'd with human life—
These hills have echo'd to the hunter's voice—
Here rang the chase,—the battle burn'd,—the notes
Of sylvan joy at high festivities
Awoke the soul to gladness ! Dear to him
His native hill,—in simple garb attir'd,
The mountaineer here rov'd ; and oft attain'd
That hale and happy age which blesses still
His vigorous descendants, ¹⁹ scatter'd round

The Moor's keen edge. Detested be the hand—
The sacrilegious hand, that would destroy
These mould'ring walls, which time has kindly spar'd
To this late hour ; and long from fierce assaults
Of the loud wintry storm, from whelming rush
Of mountain-torrent, chief from human grasp
Rapacious, be each sacred pile preserv'd ;
To bless his wanderings who delights to steal
From yonder world, and, in the deep'ning noon,
Wind o'er the noiseless Moor his thoughtful way.

And here, as sages say, in days long flown,—
Here, on this stormy, barren, blasted ridge,
Luxuriant forests rose ; ²⁰ and far away
Swept the bold hills beneath the gazer's eye,
In beautiful succession, dark with leaf,—
An ocean of refreshing verdure toss'd
By gales Atlantic. In the upland grove,
With independence bless'd, and sylvan ease,
Our fathers lov'd to dwell ; and here they form'd
The rude encampment, and the rural home,
While the gaunt wolf and winged serpent held

Dominion o'er the vallies. ²¹ Mightiest change
Has pass'd on thee, lone waste ! The spring no
more

Unfolds thy pleasant bud ; the summer gale
Waves not thy graceful foliage. On the gray
And naked rock, perchance, once nature strew'd
The generous soil profusely ; but the wrongs
Of centuries have made thee what thou art,
A howling desert in the loveliest isle
That ever ocean lav'd. One aged wood
Alone survives,—the solitary wreck
Of all those hardy foresters which erst
Adorn'd—defended thee, and cheer'd the eye
Of the old mountaineer.

How heavily

That old wood sleeps in the sunshine ;—not a leaf
Is twinkling, not a wing is seen to move
Within it ;—but, below, a mountain-stream,
Conflicting with the rocks, is ever heard,
Cheering the drowsy noon. Thy guardian oaks,
My country, are thy boast—a giant race

And undegenerate still; but of this grove—
This pigmy grove, not one has climb'd the air,
So emulously that its loftiest branch
May brush the traveller's brow. The twisted roots
Have clasp'd, in search of nourishment, the rocks
And straggl'd wide, and pierc'd the stony soil:—
In vain, denied maternal succour, here
A dwarfish race has risen. Round the boughs
Hoary and feeble, and around the trunks,
With grasp destructive, feeding on the life
That lingers yet, the ivy winds, and moss
Of growth enormous. E'en the dull vile weed
Has fix'd itself upon the very crown
Of many an ancient oak; and thus, refus'd
By Nature kindly aid,—dishonour'd—old—
Dreary in aspect—silently decays
The lonely *Wood of Wistman*! ²²

Not a breeze

Yet cheers the panting Moor;—the monarch sun
Holds high dominion. Sweet to you, ye swains,
Whom labour calls in yon luxuriant fields

Where Tamar flows, to wield the sturdy scythe,
Beneath the potent ray, it is to mark
The sea-born gales arise, and o'er the hills,
And o'er the drooping vales, refreshing sweep,
Till all the invigorated landscape rolls
Its verdant billows in the breeze, and lives
Again in graceful motion. Sweet to see
The friendly cloud, on airs Atlantic borne,
Obscure the despot orb, as if to shield
Earth from the tyranny of heaven. To day,
Not e'en a zephyr sighs, nor swims a cloud
Across the stainless blue, to bless the swain
Who toils in yonder western meads. But here,—
Though ocean-gales should blow, nor grassy seas,
Nor mellowing harvests, on the well-pleas'd eye
Would roll refreshingly—I joyless stand
Amid the burning noon, and, as the rays
Flash from the ardent rock, all-vainly wish
For the broad umbrage of yon favor'd lawns,
To shade my beating brow.

How seldom sweeps

The arch of heaven, thus beautiful and bright,
Above the waste ! I view the hill sublime
Far distant, lifting in the clear blue air
Its pyramid of rocks ; yet oft it wears
A crown of clouds, whatever season rules
The gloomy changeful months. But when it
wreathes

The snow around its high majestic brow,
And stern the desolating winter reigns,
Be heaven his aid, expos'd upon the waste,
Who meets the brumal tempest. Yet, inur'd
To cold—to danger—hardy as the race
That Scotland boasts,—the peasantry who breathe,
Dartmoor, thy piercing gales, unshrinking dare
The storm that would appal the soul of him
Who lives in fields luxurious. On the Moor—
When from the frowning sky the sudden blast
Bursts wild, and thick the feathery flakes descend,
Swift sailing on the howling wind—the swain
Bold treads the fearful path, and through the bog,
Quivering beneath his feet, sagacious winds
To seek some truant of the flock. Alas !

Not always, though inur'd to hardship—skill'd
To tread with nicest foot where danger lurks,
And brave to face the mountain-storm, escapes
The wary villager. Thrice o'er the earth
Has winter pass'd, since here the peasant boy
Untimely perish'd.²³ Him the battling winds
Resistless, and the volleying hail, and snow
O'erwhelming, found upon the unshelter'd heath,
As eve abruptly clos'd. What woes attend
On pale misfortune's sons ! In yonder towns
Voluptuous, the gay, the young, the rich,
Had met, that self-same hour, in many a hall
To pleasure consecrate ; and as around
Stream'd the full flood of radiance, music cheer'd
All hearts within, while horror rul'd the night—
The howling night without. Let Luxury hear
And sympathize ! as from each love-lit eye
Beam'd rapture, and a thousand angel forms
Were floating in the dance, the wintry drift
Of the bleak desert had inhum'd alive
The moorland wanderer ; and, as the hours
Of Pleasure's votaries flew on lightning wing,

And strains as of Elysium softly fell
Upon the ear of gaiety, the tide
Of life with him ebb'd slowly,—inch by inch,—
Endurance exquisite,—till drowsy Death
Reluctant clos'd the scene, and on the gale—
Unwept—unheard—he pour'd his parting groan !

But see, where erst by Piety uprear'd,
A cross,* now prostrate, shows the fatal spot
Where fell the luckless hunter. ²⁴ Crag and cliff,
And faithless bog, and swollen impetuous flood,
To him were things familiar ; and he dar'd,
With eagle-eye and lion-heart, the chase
Far o'er the echoing forest. When the morn
Broke o'er the brow of Mistor, loudly peal'd
His merry horn ; and, as the red-deer sought
The mazes of the shadowy vale, or swept
Swift o'er the mountain's side, the manly voice
Of the old English yeoman made the air
Ring with exulting accents. Him the fox

* The Author found the remains of this cross in the summer of 1825.

Sagacious shunn'd, and on the wolf, the bear,
He pour'd his gallant pack ; till foe on foe
Strew'd the victorious moorland. Yet he fell
Where he had triumph'd.—On the gloomy heath
The snow-storm rag'd terrific. Long he press'd
His noble steed ; and well o'er hill and dale,
By treacherous morass, through flashing stream,
And path but dim-descried, that faithful steed
His much lov'd master bore. But every track
Quick disappear'd ; and now the northern gale
More fiercely blew—chilling his heart-blood, till
Benumb'd, bewilder'd, hopeless, and alone,
The mournful eve clos'd o'er him, and he slept
His last ;—the hunter slept !

And oft the swain,
When deeply falls the winter night, narrates
To his own rustic circle, seated near
The peat-pil'd hearth, how, in th' involving cloud
Tremendous, flashing forth unusual fires,
Was wrapt the House of Prayer,—thy sacred fane
Romantic Widdicombe. ²⁵ The village bard,

In simple verse that time has kindly spar'd,
Has also sung it ; and, in style uncouth,
The pious rural annalist has penn'd
The fearful story :—

Far o'er hill and dale,

Their summons glad the sabbath bells had flung ;—
From hill and dale obedient they had sped
Who heard the holy welcoming ; and now
They stood above the venerable dead
Of centuries, and bow'd where they had bow'd
Who slept below. The simple touching tones
Of England's psalmody upswell'd, and all,
With lip and heart united, loudly sang
The praises of the Highest. But anon,
Harsh mingling with that minstrelsy, was heard
The fitful blast ;—the pictur'd windows shook,—
Around the aged tow'r the rising gale
Shrill whistled ; and the ancient massive doors
Swung on their jarring hinges. Then—at once—
Fell an unnatural calm, and with it came
A fearful gloom, deep'ning and deep'ning, till

'Twas dark as night's meridian ; for the cloud,
Descending, had within its bosom wrapt
The fated dome. At first a herald flash
Just chas'd the darkness, and the thunder spoke
Breaking the strange tranquillity. But soon
Pale horror reign'd,—the mighty tempest burst
In wrath appalling ;—forth the lightning sprang
And death came with it, and the living writh'd
In that dread flame-sheet.

Clasp'd by liquid fire—

Bereft of hope, they madly said the hour
Of final doom was nigh, and soul and sense
Wild reel'd ; and, shrieking, on the sculptur'd floor
Some helpless sank ; and others watch'd each flash
With haggard look and frenzied eye, and cower'd
At every thunder-stroke. Again a power
Unseen dealt Death around ! In speechless awe
The boldest stood ; and when the sunny ray
Glancing again on river, field, and wood,
Had chas'd the tempest, and they drank once more
The balmy air, and saw the bow of God—

His token to the nations, throwing wide
Its arch of mercy o'er the freshen'd earth—
How welcome was that light—that breeze—that
 bow ;

And, oh, how deep the feeling that awoke,
To heaven the hymn of thankfulness and joy !

Fierce, frequent, sudden, is the moorland storm ;
And oft, deep shelter'd in the stream-fed vales,
The swain beholds upon the less'ning tor,
The heav'ns descend in gloom ; till mass on mass
Accumulated, all the mighty womb
Of vapour bursts tremendous. Loud resounds
The torrent rain, and down the gutter'd slopes
Rush the resistless waters. Then the leap
Of headlong cataract is heard, and roar
Of rivers struggling o'er their granite beds.—
Nor these alone—the giant tempest past,
A thousand brooks their liquid voices lift
Melodiously, and through the smiling land
Rejoicing roll. Across the traveller's path,
Cheering his eye, the silver streamlet glides,

For ever offering to his grateful lip
Its sparkling tribute, clear as that which flow'd
From Aganippe's fount. O let me stray
With thee, sweet Dart,²⁶ and tread thy pleasant
 marge,
What time the liberal mountain flood has fill'd
The urn of Cranmere,²⁷ and the moisten'd Moor
Pours to the dales the largess of the heav'ns !—
O let me wander then, while freshness breathes,
Along the grateful meads, and list the voice,
Dartmoor—exhaustless Dartmoor—of thy streams,
Thou land of streams !

- In Britain's matchless isle

Unnumber'd floods meander, and she wears
A verdurous robe that seldom cheers the lawns
Of softer, brighter climes. But Albion, rich
In rivers sweetly gliding o'er her map,
Nor streams so fresh—so fair, nor fields so gay,
May boast, as thine Devonian. Ever falls
Upon the well pleas'd ear the melody
Of thy soft-flowing waters ; beautiful

The emerald of thy landscape—beautiful
E'en in green England !

Hail then, Dartmoor, hail
“ Mother of rivers !” From his copious fount
Swift rolls thy Teign.²⁸ At first, a moorland course
He solitary leads, but journeys soon,
A beauteous stream, by hills sublime that lift
Their leafage to the cloud ; or laves the feet
Of beetling cliffs, whence, loosen'd by the hand
Of time, has many a granite mass been hurl'd,
Loud thund'ring to the flashing waters. Lo,
Upon his banks a venerable pile
Lifts its rude form ; and who that stops to gaze
Upon that hoary Cromlech, rudely rais'd
Above the nameless dead, can look unmov'd
On the lone grave, where once the warrior stretch'd
His limbs to mortal rest ? And near the edge
Of the loud-brawling stream a Logan stands,
Haply self pois'd, for Nature loves to work
Such miracles as these amid the depths
Of forest solitudes. Her magic hand

With silent chisel fashion'd the rough rock
And plac'd the central weight so tenderly
That almost to the passing breeze it yields
Submissive motion. She around it flung
The foaming river, and above it bade
The cliff's dark verdure wave ; while songs of birds
To the wild waters' plaintive melodies
Respond harmoniously. Auxiliar brooks
Perpetual swell thee, Teign, as, hasting on
To the great sea beyond, through valleys deep
Thou roarest, battling with the gloomy rocks
That strew thy rugged bed. Yet loveliest leaf
Full oft is thine, and proud the giant oak
Graces thy bank, as, sparkling to the sun,
Thou lead'st thy flood, at last, in wider flow
Unmurmuring, till, all thy wanderings o'er,
Thou minglest with the mighty ocean-wave.

How drear the stillness brooding o'er thy lake,
Secluded Cranmere, yet from thee flow life
And boundless beauty. Thine the arrowy Dart,
Fleetest of rivers. Though the desert lifts

Awhile its tors above him, yet he sweeps
Full soon impatient down to vales of bliss—
Lovely as thine, Ausonia. Gentle Spring,
Thy breath was on the earth when late I stray'd
With him, in all his wanderings ;—gentle Spring,
The raptur'd eye of Fancy never gaz'd
Upon a lovelier vision than the wild
And wondrous landscape that still changeful hung
Around my gladsome path ! Who ever trod
That path, in thy sweet hour of bud and bloom,
And on each swiftly-varying picture, form'd
By Nature's happiest pencil, fondly look'd
And ever hoped to see, in this fair world,
A scene so fair again ?

The voice of Dart

Is loud, and hoarse his cataracts uplift
Their roarings to the woods ; but O how sweet !
The music of his gentler tones, for he
Has tones of touching sweetness. Ye who love
The thunder and the melody of streams
That from the mountain leap, careering on

Through foam and conflict ever,—seek the bank—
The varied bank of Dart. O that my feet
Were free, Holne Chase,²⁹ to linger in thy depths
Profound of shade, while deep below he rolls
Where scarce the eye the flashings of his flood
Discerns between the foliage. Yet anon
He spreads his bosom to the beam, and shoots
By vale, and hill, and precipice, and cliff
Wood-crown'd, and smiling cot, and mansion veil'd
In clust'ring leaf, until he proudly blends
With Dartmouth's echoing wave. And as he flies,
Like the wing'd shaft, the wanton zephyrs breathe
Delicious fragrance ; for upon his banks,
Beautiful ever,—Nature's hand has thrown
The odorous Myrica.

Nor unsung

Be here the Tavy, mountain born,³⁰ the theme
Of the old bard. The duteous river laves—
Fair Tavistock, thine abbey's mould'ring walls,
And flows complaining by. O ye who dwell
Around yon ruins, guard the precious charge

From hands profane !—O save the sacred pile
O'er which the wing of centuries has flown
Darkly and silently, deep-shadowing all
Its pristine honours—from the ruthless grasp
Of future violation ! Warble on—
Sweet Tavy, warble on,—and oft in bays
Indenting all the bowery shore, detain
Awhile thy flood, and fling upon the breeze
The music of thy waterfall ; but where,
O where is he,—the monk,—who lov'd to list
That melody, and stray upon thy bank
At musing eve, what time yon shatter'd fane
Arose in its magnificence ! Thy stream
Exhaustless flows, though generations rise
And vanish, and from thine enduring fount
Thou drink'st immortal being :—the old hills
That suckle thee are mighty as when first
The sun-beam glanc'd upon them ; and while Man
And all his boasted structures pass away
As snow upon the tide, they lift, unhurt,
Their venerable heads to heav'n, and seem
Pil'd for eternity.

A broader flood

Soon Tavy pours ; for lo ! the Walkham comes, ³¹
Swoll'n by fresh brooklets from the deep-seam'd hills
To mingle with his waters. Hither come,
Thou who delightest in the twilight gloom
Of woods, to spend the musing hour. O come,—
No harsher sound shall break the hallow'd pause,
At morn, noon, eve, but songs of birds, the voice
Of cataracts and murmuring of brooks
As fair as those “of Vallambrosa.” Pause
A moment too, as through the tranquil dale
Thoughtful thou journeyest :—in yonder dome,
Above whose aged tower the leafy elm
Lifts its tall head, the hand of Genius graves
The deathless name of Elliott ! ³²

For the brave

Demand thy homage ; and, with pensive step,
As slow thou followest where the devious flood
Allures, with reverence mark the sacred spot,
Where erst, all dangers past, in sylvan ease
Repos'd immortal Drake !

How deeply falls
The silence of thy vale, dear Tavy, where,
Soft-mingling with the bough's clear song, was heard
The matin—vesper—lay ! Still Nature wakes
Her matchless minstrelsy ; but many an age
Has roll'd above the monk's now traceless grave,
Since through thy abbey, Buckland, rang the notes
Of fair religion's hymn. One hoary pile
Alone remains to fix the traveller's gaze,—
One swift-decaying turret, wildly wreath'd
By the funereal ivy, and the moss
Low-creeping, and the lichen ;—mournful plants,
That love the haunts of Death !

Yet 'tis—in truth—
A holy spot ; and oft in vale like this,
Amid the deep embowering grove, the monk
With meditation dwelt. Who would not hail
A bower so green, a solitude so blest,
With a bright stream that ever on the ear
Pours its melodious chaunt ? Few months have
pass'd,

Alexis,* since I saunter'd here with thee,
In converse sweet, through all the summer-noon ;—
How brief that noon ! The bird was on the branch,
The butterfly was kissing every flower,
The bee was wandering by with lulling hum,
And Eve almost unnotic'd came, as still
We trac'd the Tavy's course. The farewell songs
Of grove and sky arose ; and, while those strains
Swell'd on the ear, the river lifted high
His voice responsive. Soon the lofty bank
Uprush'd magnificently, tree on tree
Ascending emulously to the brow,—
One noble sheet of leaf,—save where the rock
Show'd its gray naked scalp. But swift on all
Fell Evening's envious shades ; and ere we stood
Where Maristowe o'er Tamar throws the glance
To hills Cornubian—on the western steep
Hover'd the sinking orb ; and, as the groves

* My ingenious and valued friend, Mr. Shenstone, formerly of Stonehouse, now of Cambridge Place, Bath ; with whom, and my no less intelligent and esteemed friend, Mr. Hine, now of Brixton Lodge, London, I have had many a pleasant ramble on the banks of Tavy, Tamar, Plym, &c. *Viximus.*

Of Warleigh glisten'd with his last fond smile,
He dyed with thousand tints the mingling floods,
And threw supernal glories on the wave.

But, proudest of the streams that Dartmoor pours
From his prolific bosom, rolls the Plym
With murmuring course by Sheepstor's dark-brow'd
rock, ³³

And Meavy's venerable oak, ³⁴ to meet
The ever brawling Cad. ³⁵ How oft, as noon
Unnotic'd faded into eve, my feet
Have linger'd near thy bridge, romantic Shaugh;
While, as the sister waters rush'd beneath,
Tumultuous, haply glanc'd the setting beam
Upon the crest of Dewerstone. ³⁶ The hawk
Rested upon the aged cliff;—around
A holy silence reign'd;—the mountain's breast
Lay hush'd as midnight;—not a vagrant gale
Sigh'd through the woods of Plym, and on the soul
Fell deep the impressive calm. The sun-ting'd cloud
Sail'd slowly through the heav'n; but Earth had
nought

Of motion, save the river hurrying on
To seek the distant billow. One such hour
Outweighs a year of misery ; and oft
In the great struggle with the tyrant world,
The spirit feels refresh'd as Memory paints,
In hues imperishable, scenes like those
Which, in that hour of freedom, lay around
My happy path.

O Plym belov'd ! to thee

I owe the few bright sun-breaks that have cheer'd
My toilsome pilgrimage ! Thy vale to me
Has been a Home—a Refuge—when the bonds
Of toil and care (how seldom !) have been loos'd,
And I again have on my fever'd brow
Felt the pure breeze. It was a lovely time
When last I sojourn'd with thee ;—on thy groves
The western gale was breathing—pensively,—
And here and there the twinkling foliage show'd
Strange hues, but exquisite, and of all shades—
Purple and gold, mingled with green, the robe
With which old Autumn clothes the trees—awhile,

For 'tis as frail as fair, and will not brook
The visitation of the winds. In thought
I wander with thee still, and see thee shap'd
Into a bright infinity of forms,
As the rocks mould thee ; and each joy renew,
Sacred to friendship, felt upon thy banks,
O stream belov'd ! How oft, by Fancy led,
Sweet Plym, at morn or eve, I stray with thee ;
But chief at shadowy eve, I linger where
The ocean weds thee, and delighted view,
Proud rising o'er the vast Atlantic surge,
Thine own,—thy Plymouth,—nurse of heroes,—her
“ Who bears thy noble name !”

His heart-blood chills,
Who from the rifted bank of Lyd ³⁷ flings down
A hurried glance ; and, as he trembling marks
The volum'd foam, and on his startled ear
Appalling sounds, almost unearthly, rise
From rocks and waters battling in the womb
Of the far-cloven earth ;—with looks aghast
The peasant points him to the unhallow'd spot,

Where, 'mid the shrieking night, the maniac rush'd,
Despairing, to the black abyss below.

But—Lyd,—enough of darkness and of death !
Again thou burstest into day,—again
The vales receive thee,—and above thee blooms
The flower, and rolls the song, and from the hills
Flows the fresh mountain-torrent, soon to swell
Thy tranquil waters. Oft the traveller lists
The roar of that wild torrent, headlong dash'd
O'er the rude precipice ; and hastes to gain
The strand below, whence, rushing on his view
At once, the stream, all light and music, springs
From the bold bank. Yet not in one broad sheet
It leaps the dark, majestic cliff,—a rock
Divides it, and the bright and broken flood
Impetuous descends in graceful curves
To mingle with the foaming world below ;—
While, sparkling in the mid-day beam, a shower
Of spray, for ever hovering, bathes the plants
That love the mountain and the stream.

The bird

Is here,—the solitary bird that makes
The rock his sole companion. ³⁵ Leafy vale,
Green bower, and hedge-row fair, and garden rich
With bud and bloom, delight him not ;—he bends
No spray, nor roams the wilderness of boughs,
Where love and song detain a million wings,
Through all the summer morn—the summer eve ;—
He has no fellowship with waving woods,—
He joins not in their merry minstrelsy.—
But flits from ledge to ledge, and, through the day
Sings to the highland waterfall—that speaks
To him again in strains—he loves and lists
For ever.

With a chilling aspect rise
The rocks—of iron hue,—yet has the hand
Of Nature, e'en on them, thus frowning, flung
Enchanting forms. “As pearls upon the arm
Of the jet Æthiop,” looking fairer still
From their alliance, so the snow-white moss

Has fix'd itself upon the cliff, and seems
More white, more beautiful, more spotless, plac'd
On Horror's sable brow. The graceful broom
Waves its transparent gold; the pensive fern,
In the least stir of the inconstant breeze,
Bends its light plume. Upon the sunny bank
The fox-glove rears its pyramid of bells,
Gloriously freckled—purpled and white—the flower
That cheers Devon's fields—and, by its side,
Another, that, in her maternal clime,
Scarce shuts its eye on austral suns, and wakes
And smiles on Winter oft—the primrose,—hail'd
By all who live.

How deep the eternal rush
Of the wild moorland cataract has scoop'd
The adamant base! and in that gulph
The waters all unite; in fiercest joy,
Swift eddying, round the polish'd basin, till
Involv'd in foam, they, eddying, burst away
To seek the Tamar's wave. Thy castle yet,
Sweet Lyd, remains, of all the dwellings fair,

That cluster'd once upon thy marge. Alas !
Profoundest silence reigns where roll'd the voice
Of business on the fitful wind. No more
The crowded mart, the echoing street, where flow'd
The human stream along,—so swiftly sped
To pale oblivion's gulph ! The grave has clos'd
Upon thy myriads, Lydford ;—nought remains
Of thee and thine, but that frail lonely pile,
Sole relic of thy ancient glory, where,
Proud floating o'er the battlements, thy sons
Once gave the banner to the breeze. Too soon
Dishonour'd by the dull, dank, creeping moss,
And the long grass shrill whistling in the gale
Of pensive evening, shall those time-worn walls,
Assail'd by wintry storms, submissive bow
To the strong, stern, unsparing hand of fate.

And Devon owes to thee, prolific Moor,
The rapid Erme.³⁹ Adown the wooded slopes
He comes, deep shaded oft, and foaming leads
His stream beneath that bridge, enwreath'd with
leaf,

O'er which the traveller bending loves to gaze
Upon the flashing waters. Thine the Yealm,—
Pride of our austral vales, 4°—our austral vales
Unrivall'd ! Foster'd by the genial clime,
The ancient oak, the tall Corinthian elm,
Of amplest growth, attend his sylvan course :—
And sweet it is, from Puslinch' breezy mount,
To eye him winding slowly through the meads,
Where smiles the village, or where Kitley rears
Its noble groves, or Coffleet spreads its lawns
Delicious, or upon the verdant slope
Beyond, fair Langdon rises. And where swells
The southern wave to meet him, has the hand
Of Nature thrown such pleasing scenes, profuse,
As, rolling round the varied shores of earth,
The restless flood of ocean seldom laves.

Streams—desert born !—I love you, and I love
The fruitful mother that with look austere,
Yet bountiful of heart, has sent you forth,
A matchless progeny, to bless the earth,
And bid it bloom like Eden. I could dwell

For ever near you ;—or, when flashing down—
Far seen—far heard—the mountain steeps sublime ;
Or when ye warble through the myrtle vales
Of Devon, wide diffusing o'er her shores
Atlantic, boundless beauty ;—but farewell !
For other themes command.

Bright Noon declines ;
And as the monarch of the day rolls swift
His car to other worlds, and Evening throws
Her first faint shadows on the purpling hills
Of the bold billowy East, reviving come
The ocean-gales. I tread the silent waste
With strength renew'd,—yet journey where no foot
Crosses my path—no salutation, kind
And welcome, breaks the lengthen'd dreary pause !
Here might the man, disgusted with the world,
Retire, and commune with himself, with God,
And Nature ;—here, unsought, unvex'd, unknown,
The stern contemner of his race might dwell
With mountain independence ever ;—lord
Of the lone desert. On his musings free,

Nor speech impertinent, nor harsh command,
Nor frivolous talk, consuming half the hours
Of hollow artificial life ; nor hum
Of populous cities, nor the deaf'ning din
And shout of savage war, would e'er intrude ;
But he would live with liberty, and climb,
With vigorous step, the heathy ridge, or wind
The vale, and list with rapture to the sounds
Delightful, that can bless e'en steep and stream
Of the scorn'd forest. Nor would Winter's voice,
Though stern, be undelightful ;—the high peal
Of the great thunder, and the winds that speak
Almost as loud as the loud thunder. Then,
Though guilt might crouch, his steady eye would
mark

The lightning gild the hill's tempestuous brow,
Or flash from tor to tor, illuming all
The man-deserted waste ; and, as the storm,
Rocking his lowly home, sublimely raged,
His high-wrought soul ⁴¹ would triumph in that hour,
And hail the awful elemental war !

But pause a moment here ! O ye have been,
Volcano, Earthquake, Deluge, potent—thus,
With blast, and flame, and flood, to mar the face
Of agonized Nature ! See the Moor
Upheaves its sward into the sunny air,
Wild as when ocean flings his monstrous waves,
By tempests vex'd, to heav'n ! As deep as sink
His floods abysmal, yawn the cloven vales,
E'en to the bowels of the earth ! Around
Immensely spread the wrecks of that dark age
When, with avenging rush and roar, the flood
Usurp'd the shrinking land. The mountain reel'd
From its vast base, and the stupendous cliff,
Though ribb'd with marble, fell,—or trembling till
The turbulent waters pass'd, remain'd,—a rude
And shatter'd pile. The huge enduring rock,
Lash'd by that shoreless mighty main, preserves,
Full deeply graven on his rugged brow,
Traces—most fearful—of that awful hour
When the deep-groaning earth its bosom oped
To the fierce ploughing billows. Over all

The Deluge roll'd victorious. Alps withdrew
His humbled head, and Andes rear'd in vain
His tallest summit. Still the ocean shell
Rests on the proudest peaks of earth ; but where
The howl of the conflicting surges rose
Now swell the songs of birds ; and bud, leaf, flow'r,
Beautiful births,—adorn the laughing slopes
Of the rejoicing mountains. And, ye hills—
Ye vales,—though still your peaceful bosoms bear,
Never to be obliterate, the marks
Of fearful suffering,—while the earth remains,
The Power Supreme hath given to the sea,
His bound—impassable ;—and ye shall be
Companions of the sun and shower, and feel
Their blessed influence. No more—no more—
Shall sea and sky, united, o'er the earth
Pour their devouring waters. He has sworn,—
He who takes up the ocean as a drop
In his Almighty palm—that vernal hours,
And summer glow, and autumn's golden reign,
Seed-time and harvest, shall not fail !—and bent—

In the dark pathway of the cloud, when storms,
Descending, fiercely sweep the awe-struck earth,
A glorious vision—his memorial Bow !

Chief, Earthquake has been here, with ruthless foot
Trampling the Moor. O that the insidious foe
Who strikes, but warns not, had thus always made
The wilderness his prey ; but he delights
To seek the haunts of men,—the crowded port—
The mart of commerce—or the rosy bower
Of Pleasure, and at one dread sudden blow
Destroy his myriads. Thus, with all her throng
Of gay and fair, Euphemia* on the eye
'This moment rose ; the next, a loathsome lake
Clos'd o'er her, and the black cloud hung above,
And all was still. The pestilence that walks
At noon-day, thinning the throng'd street, still spares
Its multitudes who live and dare to hope ;
And Death at one fell unsuspected blow
Strikes not his shrieking thousands ;—one by one

* See Father Kircher's account of the earthquake in Calabria, 1638,

From the domestic circle bows his head
To the stern victor ; and the anguish'd tear
Is shed above their graves. But Earthquake springs
At once upon the power and pride of man,—
His domes, his temples, and his towers sublime ;—
Rocks his imperial cities as the surge
Uplifts the buoyant skiff ; and to a gulph
Of horror, yawning from the inmost depths
Of the affrighted globe, remorseless flings
His countless victims !

On the very edge
Of the vast moorland, startling every eye,
A shape enormous rises ! High it towers
Above the hill's bold brow, and, seen from far,
Assumes the human form ;—a Granite God ! ⁴²—
To whom, in days long flown, the suppliant knee
In trembling homage bow'd. The hamlets near
Have legends rude connected with the spot,
(Wild swept by every wind,) on which he stands—
The Giant of the Moor. Unnumber'd shapes

By Nature strangely form'd,—fantastic—vast,—
The silent desert throng ! 'Tis said that here
The Druid wander'd.⁴³ Haply have these hills
With shouts ferocious, and the mingled shriek,
Resounded, when to Jupiter upflam'd
The human hecatomb. The frantic seer
Here built his sacred circle ; for he loved
To worship on the mountain's breast sublime—
The earth his altar, and the bending heav'n
His canopy magnificent. The rocks
That crest the grove-crown'd hill he scooped to hold
The Lustral Waters ; and to wondering crowds
And ignorant, with guileful hand he rock'd
The yielding Logan. Practised to deceive,
Himself deceiv'd, he sway'd the fear-struck throng
By craftiest stratagems ; and (falsely deem'd
The minister of Heav'n) with bloodiest rites
He awed the prostrate isle, and held the mind
From age to age in Superstition's spells.

Farewell ye solitudes immense—farewell !

At last, refreshingly, the fields below
Appear, in all the bud, bloom, foliage, deck'd,
Of the life-breathing Spring. The Moor resigns
Not suddenly its sternness ;—not at once
The soft—the beautiful of Nature meets
The raptur'd eye ; but here is union sweet
Of tree and torrent—verdure—waterfall
And leaf-hung streamlet, that may well detain
Awhile the wanderer. A myriad forms
Start into life, that shun the highland waste
And brook not highland gales. The bough here holds
Communion with the frowning cliff,—the cliff
Wearing its moorland mantle,—green and gold,—
Moss, ivy, lichen—rises o'er the broad
Luxurious sward.⁴⁴ And in the pleasant grass
That smiles around, fair waving in the breeze,
Delicious hues are seen—innumerable ;—
As if the rain drops of the fresh wild Spring
Had blossom'd where they fell.

But hark ! the rush

Of torrents ;—enter here,—it is a spot
Almost unknown—untrod—the traveller
Must turn him from the broad and beaten track
Of men, to find it. Let no heedless step
Intrude profanely,—let the worldling rest
In his own noisy world ;—far off,—the vale
Is not for him ; but he that loves to pay
His silent adorations where, supreme
In beauty, Nature sits, may spend the hour
Of holiest rapture here. The eternal rocks,
Up-pil'd to the mid-sky, come sweeping round
Her pious votary ; and she has hung
With green undying wreaths the mountain-walls,
And sprinkled them with mountain-flowers that bud
And bloom inviolate. So high the cliffs
Ascend into the sunny air, that he
Who walks below sees heaven its azure bend
Above him like a dome. The turf is soft
And fair, and wears an eye-refreshing hue ;
And from its virgin emerald thickly rise
Bright flowers in glorious rivalry ; the gay

And glossy king-cup, and its "neighbour sweet,"
The daisy, silver-ray'd ; and, blue as heaven,
The lowly violet ; and deeper still,
Than e'en the blue of ocean, that lov'd child
Of Spring—the hare-bell.

All as exquisite

As beam, breeze, shower, could mould them : he who
treads

The vale oft steps aside, lest he should press,
With ruthless foot, where forms so exquisite
In silent loveliness upspring. 'The sward
Now undulates, fair verdant billows rais'd
Like ocean's when the spring-gale kisses them—
No more. And often on the smiling bank
The hawthorn spreads its snowy blossoms, free
From human grasp rapacious ; and below,
Amid the sunny luxury of grass,
Are tufts of pale-ey'd primroses, entwin'd
With many a bright-hued flower, and shrub that
scents

The all-voluptuous air ; but chief, thine own—
Land of the myrtle—thine own lovely birth,
The fragrant —meek—Myrica.

Through the vale,
As still you stray enraptur'd,—at your foot,
Cheering the pleasant sod, a hundred rills
Warble immortal music. It is sweet—
Most sweet, to view the playful brooklets roll
Their chrystal on,—each on his way adown
The valley's peaceful slopes. With louder rush,
And deeper melody, a torrent flows
Full in the midst,—meandering, as if loth
To quit the dale's dear bosom. On his marge
I mark the cheerful bird that loves the stream,
And the stream's voice, and answers, in like strains
Murmuring deliciously. 'Tis fit that they
Should hold communion :—other company
That bird seeks not, but his dear mate, that now
And always lists the song of both ; and builds
Her nest above the social stream.

And here

The waters sleep,—in a cool lake, where flits
The shadow of each cloud that sails the heaven ;
And in it, too, the tall rock, rising near,
From base to brow with verdurous tresses deck'd,
Is clearly pictur'd. Nought disturbs the calm
Of the fair mirror, but the startling rush
Of crimson spotted trout to seize that gay
Adventurous voyager,—the fly.

An oak,

The patriarch of the vale, bends o'er that sheet
Of liquid silver. Haply has the Spring
With silent power renew'd his bud and leaf
A thousand years ; yet still he lives, and owns
Its gentle influence. His scalp is bald
Through age, and one enormous arm is stretch'd
To heav'n, scathed by the lightning stroke ;—a pale
And blighted thing amid its brethren boughs
So green and vigorous ; and still the bird
Builds in them,—'tis the Home of Love,—the seat

Of raptur'd song. There is no tree that hath
In all the dale such majesty ; the lake
Reflects it proudly.

But as still you trace
The valley to its head, insensibly
Its matchless beauty fades, and soon it wears
A sterner character. The king-cup, bright
In glossy gold,—the daisy, silver-ray'd,—
And sapphire-tinctur'd violet, and, wreath'd
With snow, the hawthorn,—and the hare-bell blue
As ocean ;—all are vanish'd,—all at once,
As if some spell had curs'd the ground. The rocks
Terrific rise, clasping a rugged dell ;
And into it, loud thundering o'er the steeps,
The mountain-rivers rush. A lonely place,
Almost unvisited, but by the hawk ;
And 'tis a habitation fit for him
Who makes Heav'n one vast solitude,—the Earth
Still,—fearfully still ;—beneath whose piercing eye
Cowers close the lark, and in deep leafy bower,
The minstrel of the bough.

No voice is heard
But his and the dark raven's. High they build
Above the floods tumultuous,—high above
The roaring waterfall. No human foot
Has ever climb'd that chaos vast of rocks,
Rude scatter'd, as if earthquake to the sky
Had flung the ancient mountain, and had strown
The shiver'd relics—thus ! And yet the eye
Wanders not undelighted o'er those wrecks
Thrown wildly in the torrent's foaming bed ;
For there the waters take unnumber'd forms
Of grandeur and of loveliness. And see
The evening beam has gilded all,—the fair,
The great ;—how exquisite the view
Of the calm vale,—its beauty and its power
Touch'd by the setting ray. Enlivening gleams
Of sunshine now are breaking through the ranks
Of yon old foresters below ; and there
The cliffs, though stern, have bathed their awful
brows,
In the full flood of radiance ; e'en the moss

'That fringes them seems gay,—the ivy smiles,
The pensive lichen glows, and each wild rill
Leaps sportive in the beam.

The zenith spreads
Its canopy of sapphire, but the West
Has a magnificent array of clouds ;
And, as the breeze plays on them, they assume
The forms of mountains, castled cliffs and hills,
Deep rifted glens, and groves, and beetling rocks ;
And some that seem far off, are voyaging
Their sun-bright path in folds of silver ; some
In golden masses float, and others have
Edgings of burning crimson.—Isles are seen
All lovely, set within an emerald sea ;
And there are dyes in the rich heavens,—such
As sparkle in the grand and gorgeous plume
Of Juno's fav'rite bird, or deck the scal'd
And wreathing serpent.

Never, from the birth

Of time, were scatter'd o'er the glowing sky
More splendid colourings. Every varying hue
Of every beautiful thing on earth,—the tints
Of heav'n's own Iris,—all are in the West
On this delicious eve.

But now the sun
Is veil'd a moment, and the expansive waste
At once is wrapt in shade. The song has ceas'd
Of the rejoicing earth and sky ;—the breeze
Sighs pensively along ; the moorland streams
Appear less lovely, and on Fancy's ear
Complaining flow. Again the shadows fly
Before the glancing beam ;—again the sun—
The conquering sun resumes his state ; and he
That with Elysian forms and hues bedecks
So gloriously the skies, cheers thee,—e'en thee,—
Thou solitary one ;—the very heart
Of the wild Moor is glad ! The eye discerns
The mountain-ridges sweep away in vast
And regular succession ;—wave on wave

Rolling and glittering in the sun,—until
They reach the utmost West. The lark is up
Exulting in the bright blue heav'n;—the streams
Leap wantonly adown the laughing slopes;
And on the ear the poetry of bells,
Far borne by Auster's welcome gale, is heard;
All else is mute,—silently happy,—Earth
Reposes in the sunset.

Let me gaze
At the great vision ere it pass; for now
The day-god hovers o'er the western hill,
And sheds his last fond ray. Farewell! farewell!
Who givest beauty to the cloud, and light—
Joy, music, to the earth! And must the tints
And shapes divine which thou hast form'd, decay,—
The mountain, and the temple, and the tower,
That float in yonder fields of air;—the isles
Of all surpassing loveliness; and seas
Of glorious emerald, that seem to flow
Around the gold-fringed reefs and rocks;—must all

Vanish, with thee, at the remorseless touch
Of the swift-coming twilight !

They will fade,—
Those hues and forms enchanting. See behind
The billowy horizon once more sinks
The traveller of six thousand years. With him
Depart the glories of the west. The tints
Elysian change—the fiercely brilliant streaks
Of crimson disappear ; but o'er the hills
A flush of orange hovers, softening up
Into harmonious union with the blue
That comes a-sweeping down ; for Twilight hastes
To dash all other colours from the sky
But this her fav'rite azure. Even now
The East displays its palely-beaming stars,
With the mild radiating moon ; and thus
There is no end to all thy prodigies,
O Nature !

And the Night her ancient reign

Holds o'er the silent earth. Ye forms sublime,
Adieu, that people the great Moor ;—the tor,
The hallow'd cairn, the everlasting rocks,
Moulded by time into a million shapes
Of beauty and of grandeur :—and adieu
Ye voices that upon the wanderer's ear
Ever refreshing come :—the flow of rill,
And music of the cataract, and leap
Of mountain-stream, and sigh of mountain breeze,
And, scar'd by the intruder man, the rush
Of the wild bird. The raptur'd day is o'er ;—
The morn of high anticipation, noon
Of rich fruition, and the tender eve—
All vanish'd ! Sweetly falls the lunar ray
Upon my homeward path,—enchanting home,—
Though seated in that noisy world whose voice
Again I hear ; for harshly on the breeze
The thunder of the cannon comes.* No more,
O that no more upon my ear might roll
Its far-resounding peal. Be mine of groves

* The Evening Gun fired in Plymouth harbour.

The soothing minstrelsies,—of hill and dale,
That silence which the brook—the bird—alone
Melodious break. That calm, that sacred joy—
Those harmonies divine, at morn—noon—eve—
Have bless'd my moorland pilgrimage. But soon
Shall dawn the dreary morrow ;—soon the toils,
The cares, the ills of life, with scarcely Hope
To brighten the involving gloom, shall scare
My spirit, and awake the frequent sigh
For scenes so fair, so grand, and moments bright
As cheer'd to-day my varied course. Ah when,
The happy hour shall Fate relenting bring
Of sunshine, peace, and liberty again !



NOTES.

BY THE LATE WM. BURT, ESQ., SECRETARY TO THE
PLYMOUTH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

NOTES TO DARTMOOR.

NOTE 1, Page 3.

The meek unshelter'd Myrtle.

THE genial nature of the Devonshire air, and its favourableness to the growth of the Myrtle, are well known to medical and other persons. Mrs. Piozzi, in her journey through Italy, incidentally confirms the latter fact. "Our solitude," she says, "is perfect in a place" (Bagni di Pisa) "which beggars all description; where the mountains are mountains of marble, and the bushes on them bushes of myrtle as large as our hawthorns, and white with blossoms as they are at the same time of the year in Devon." In 1782, four myrtles of extraordinary size and beauty, one of them 27 feet high, and 1 foot 6 inches in circumference, decorated the front of Warleigh-House, the seat of the Rev. Walter Radcliffe, which, making it damp, have been cut down; but there are still some of considerable size at that place.

In the South Hams the myrtle and aloe have attained to remarkable perfection, particularly at Salcombe. Several houses in Mary Church, and indeed of almost every village on the southern coast of Devon, are profusely bespread with the former; and even at Holne, in the immediate vicinity of Dartmoor, it may be almost said in the Moor itself, the myrica gale, a species of myrtle appropriately called the Devonshire myrtle, is abundant, and a sweet smelling ornament of the woods.

NOTE 2, Page 6.

Holiday.

IN explanation of Mr. Carrington's frequent allusion to holidays, it may not be here out of place to observe, that as through the greater part of his life he was occupied for six days in the week from eight, and, during part of the year, from seven in the morning until eight at night, in the laborious occupation of public teacher, it was quite natural that he should, occasionally, refer, with marked gratification, to the seldom occurring breaks in his chain of toil.

NOTE 3, Page 7.

*Thy belt
Of hills mysterious, shadowy.*

A French writer, after describing the scenery northward of Mount Edgcombe, observes, that Dartmoor enclosed the whole in its magnificent belt. Dartmoor, also, although in some respects an elevated table land, is not strictly a plain, but a series of hemispherical swellings or undulations, gradually overtopping each other, and here and there interrupted by deep depressions, yet without forming what may be properly called distinct mountains. It is covered with black and brown peat and crowned at intervals with tors; some rising like pillars or turrets, others composed of blocks piled together, others divided into horizontal or perpendicular strata, and others so symmetrically arranged as to resemble the ruins of ancient castles. Innumerable masses of stone, more or less rounded and smoothed, lie scattered over the general surface. To a person standing on some lofty point of the Moor, it wears the appearance of an irregular broken waste, which may be best compared to the long rolling waves of a tempestuous ocean, fixed into solidity by some instantaneous and powerful impulse. To a similar effect, but more compressedly, observes Gilpin, in his work on the western parts of Devon: "Dartmoor spreads like the ocean after a storm, heaving in large swells." Even at a distance

it has this billowy aspect, which, in every zone, according to Humboldt, is the characteristic of primitive chains. That Dartmoor is of this description is clearly shewn by the nature of its rocks, the debris bestrewing the beds of its rivers, and its alpine plants. The changeful hues of the Moor, at different periods, as exhibited in the north-north-east, are picturesque objects for many miles around. At one time the clouds creep up the acclivities, and envelope them in a white vapour, through which the sun breaks with difficulty. At another, their nakedness is exposed to the full glare of its beams. At another, light and shade either chequer the surface or follow each other in rapid alternation. Mornings and evenings they are of a deep blue colour; but when the snow mantles them with its fleecy skirt, they remind the spectator of the Appenine hills, by which title they are rather ostentatiously dignified by Risdon; whilst Leland, in a less complimentary strain, calls Dartmoor "a wild morisch or forest ground." The connection between Dartmoor and the lower chain, in Cornwall, is plainly discernible from several spots near Plymouth.

The almost total absence of trees and dwellings are striking features.

"There is on Dartmoor," says the Rev. T. P. Jones, "a stillness, a want of life and activity, and a sombre dignity of expression in its black and barren pastures,

which can only be seen in similar ranges of uncultivated land ;" to which may be added, from Gilpin's remarks on Salisbury Plain : " Regions like this which have come down to us rude and untouched from the beginning of time, fill the mind with grand conceptions, far beyond the efforts of art and cultivation. Impressed by such views of nature, our ancestors worshipped the God of nature in those boundless scenes, which gave them the highest notions of eternity."

Except the continual murmur of waters, and the hum of insects, of which the lower part of the atmosphere is full, there is nothing to disturb the prevailing serenity, and which Humboldt well defines as "that contrast of motion and silence ; that aspect of nature at once calm and animated, which strikes the imagination of the traveller."

NOTE 4, Page 9.

leap
Of the hoarse waterfall.

The roaring of torrents in the Moor, after heavy rains, and when the wind favours its transmission, is sublime to a degree inconceivable by those who have never heard this impressive music in a wild and soli-

tary district. It is occasionally louder by night than by day, which the peasants consider as a prognostic of rain, and often strikes the ear even at the distance of three miles.

This majestic sound applies to the rivers generally, when swollen and agitated, but the falls of Beckey and Lydford afford particular examples of it.

De Luc, in his Geological Tour through England, gives a picturesque account of the former.

“A beautiful stream,” he says, “was first seen to precipitate itself from above, and for some way to bound, divided, from block to block, often disappearing between them and again issuing forth in several rills, which glided along their mossy surface, falling upon some of them in a sheet of water, with the alternate glittering and transparency of silver gauze, but this sheet was soon lost among the blocks, whence the stream repeatedly burst forth, and afterwards flowing calmly for some distance, rushed precipitately down another slope.”

There are some curious mosses around, with the lichen articulatus, which the Rev. T. P. Jones, of North Bovey, an excellent botanist, declares to be not a common plant; and who speaking of the same fall, remarks: “The trees around it are a striking contrast to the barren downs and shapeless tors in-

closing the valley, and the deep murmurs of the cataract are in strict unison with the other features of the scene."

The river giving birth to Beckey fall, assumes the several names, in its course, of Hayne, Beckey, Bovey, and West Teign, and is described under the head of rivers. Lydford and Kit's falls will be found in the note on Lyd, and the fall on the East Dart under the head of that river.

NOTE 5, Page 9.

*Devonia's rivers flow ; a thousand brooks
Roll o'er thy rugged slopes.*

The rivers of Dartmoor, whether considered in their wilder or their softer scenes, may vie with any in the kingdom, and they are not only diversified and beautiful in their aspects, but very numerous, independent of the brooks, lakes, and heads, which partake of a similar character.

The principal are the *Dart*, *Teign*, *Tavy*, *Taw*, and *Plym*, all elsewhere described in separate notes, except the *Taw*, which rises near Throwley, in the

north quarter of the Moor, out of or near Cranmere hill, proceeds towards the north, and disembogues itself in Barnstaple Bay. The other four also rise out of or near the same hills, travel southward, and fall into the British Channel, giving their names, as they meander, or at their embouchures, to sundry towns and villages—an honour amply shared by the Taw, whose name stands indelibly connected with the hundred of Tawton, and the respective towns of Tawton, remarkable for being the first Bishop's see in Devon, (afterwards removed to Crediton) and thence called Tawton Episcopo or Bishop Tawton. North Tawton, the birth place of Sir Henry Bath, a Justice of the King's Bench, and possessing a small intermitting spring. South Tawton and Tawstock, containing in its church many monuments of the Bouchiers, Earls of Bath, from whom descended the present Sir Bouchier Wrey.

The secondary rivers, as far as they can be collected, are the *Ock* or *Ockment*; *Wrey*, having its source in the north quarter and falling into the western branch of Teign; *Harbern*, an auxiliary of the Dart; *Cad* and *Meavy*, elsewhere noticed; *Hayne*, *Beckey*, *Bovey* and *West Teign*, supposed to be the same river; *Torey*, *Tinkhay*, *Cowsic*, falling into West Dart; *Stour*, *Loman*, *Aven* or *Aun*, *Arme* or *Erme*, elsewhere noticed; *Yco*, *Yealm*, elsewhere noticed; *Walkham*, elsewhere noticed; *Lyd*, elsewhere noticed; *Swin*, *Webber*, *Westbourne* or *Webborn*, *Jordan*, *Straine*, and

Swincombe, the two last rising in the south quarter and falling into West Dart.

Of these rivers, the Ock or Ockment bestows its appellation on Okehampton, or, as it is termed in Domesday Book, Ockmentune, which at the conquest had ninety-two knight's fees, a castle, (a royal fortress, until dismantled by Henry VIII.) a park, disparked by the same monarch, four burgesses, and a market. It was incorporated regularly by James I., confirmed by Charles I., but sent members to Parliament in the 28th of Edward I., and the 7th of Edward II., and is the baronial title of a British peer. The Ock springs out of Cranmere hill, has two branches, and joins the Torridge near Hatherleigh, before its union with the Severn Sea or Bristol Channel.

The Hayne, Beckey, Bovey, and West Teign, as before remarked, are supposed to be the same river. The first rests on the authority of De Luc, who states that two rivulets (the southernmost of them forming Beckey Fall, and having near it loose growan with granite blocks) rise at the bottom of a combe beyond Manaton, and rush together down a slope on which they unite and then become the Hayne. The Rev. T. P. Jones is the authority for Beckey. The Bovey and West Teign, according to the neighbourhood, are the same river: but the most probable conclusion is, that, in their origins, they are all different

rivers blending together at last into one. Bovey Heathfield, a spot celebrated for lying many feet below the sea, and its fossil or ligneous coal, derives its name from the Bovey

The Aven or Aun has its birth in the south quarter, is profusely covered with copse wood at certain parts like the generality of the other rivers, and passing by Aveton or Aunton Gifford, empties itself into the sea at Avenmouth; where stands St. Michael's rock, once crowned with the remains of a chapel, mentioned by Camden, and thus preserved in ancient rhyme:—

“Where Aven's waters with the sea are mixt,
St. Michael firmly on a rock is fixt.”

At Diptford, on this river, is a remarkably picturesque scene, consisting of a bridge, cascade, large rocks and overhanging foliage.

The Webber, Westbourne, or Webborn, emerges from a large combe near Widdicombe, and, rapidly pursuing its way over opposing rocks, incorporates itself with the Dart near Spitchwick. De Luc observes, that the bed of this river has in it greywacke, red felspar, chrystals, and pure quartz, which is sometimes observable in the other streams; as well as breccias, pudding-stones, sand-stones, and sand, being debris brought down by floods from the high lands.

The banks of the Dartmoor Jordan are embellished, two miles below Widdicombe, towards Spitchwick, with the hamlet of Ponsworthy and its bridge, one of the most romantic spots in Devonshire, and claiming the notice of the painter.

Of the remaining secondary rivers no gleanings can be obtained, excepting what appears respecting the Cad, Meavy, Arme or Erme, Yealm, Walkham, and Lyd, amongst the notes.

The brooks, lakes, and heads, though held subordinate to the rivers, would, in a less aqueous tract, be counted worthy of names, which some of them have not.

Those with names are *Walbrook* or *Wellabrook* in east quarter, one of the forest boundaries, and falling into East Dart; *Western Wellbrook* in south quarter falling into Aven; *Wotesbrook* rising in the Moor and falling at its boundary into Teign; *Crambrook* rising near Moreton, and falling precipitately into the same river; *Bowbrook*; *Cherrybrook* from east quarter and an auxiliary of West Dart; *Rakernbrook* rising on the Moor and falling into Tavy near Mary Tavy; another *Rakernbrook*, whence the parish of Rakernford is so called; *Holwelbrook*, *Radford*, *Redford* or *Reddalfordbrook*, *Rattlebrook*, falling into Tavy; *Blackabrook* in west quarter and falling into West Dart; *Holbernbroom*, *Okebrook*, *Sheepstorbrook*, *Tutorlake*, *Redlake*,

Brookhead, Walkhamhead, Plymhead, Meavyhead, Tavyhead, Armehead, and Avenhead.

Thus, in Dartmoor, or on its immediate borders, there are not fewer than five principal rivers, twenty-four secondary rivers, fifteen brooks, besides some perhaps without names, two lakes, and seven heads; or altogether fifty-three streams, which is certainly remarkable in a district only about twenty miles long by ten miles wide. Such a superabundance of water doubtless arises from the morasses or bogs, so frequent and extensive on the Moor, the spongy soil of which retains the rains, or rather torrents, when they fall, until gradually dealt out in rivulets, brooks, and rivers, to the fertilization and ornament of surrounding and distant parts. In this manner a great apparent evil to the few, by the all wise and ever bountiful provisions of the Supreme Author of nature, is converted into a good for the many.

Most of the streams are, at intervals, broken and intercepted in their currents by large masses of granite, and other rocks, bestrewing their beds. They are further subject, like alpine streams in general, to violent and almost instantaneous risings, which may be caused either by the bursting of water spouts, or by there being nothing to impede heavy showers from suddenly rushing down the mountainous declivities into the nearest streams. The smoothness of the stones in their beds sufficiently attests the existence and fre-

quency of these hasty inundations. The same streams often exhibit, after rains, in shallow places, an amber colour, and, where deeper, a dark brown tinge like coffee grounds ; which Humboldt, speaking of South American rivers wearing the same hues, attributes to the presence of an extractive vegetable matter, probably a solution of carbonic hydrogen, filtering through a thick mass or wad of grasses. The same thing is met with in most highland or forest waters throughout the world ; and Ossian, in his immortal poems, sublimely refers to it : "Red through the stony vale comes down the stream of the hill." An allusion to the same fact may be inferred from the names Cherrybrook, Blackabrook, Redfordbrook, and Redlake. By this colouring it has been conjectured, that the water acquires an antiseptic quality, imparted to the adjacent peat bogs overflowed, and tending to preserve the combustible property of the turf collected from them. At other times the streams are of an argentine or crystalline hue.

To render the numerous rivers available for public use, the bridges over them in Dartmoor, and at no remote distances around it, are equally, if not more, numerous, being chiefly built or liable to be repaired by the county. In Lifton division there are 19, Tavistock 15, Buckland 15, Ivy Bridge 5, Modbury 8, Ashburton 11, Aveton Gifford 6, Brent 6, Buckfastleigh 10, Chagford 9, Bickington and Newton 19, besides others in North Tawton and Dartmouth divi-

sions, amongst which are Taw Bridge, Lydford Bridge, Dartmeet Bridge, Hoo Meavy, Lower Meavy and Higher Meavy Bridges, Plym Bridge, Yealm Bridge, Ermington and Little Ermington Bridges, Dart Bridge, Aveton Gifford or Aven Bridge, (the largest in the county) Wrey Bridge, Cadaford Bridge, Teign Bridge, &c. May 27th, 1809, an act was passed for building a bridge over Dart at Emmett, and even the humble Bowbrook confers its name on one.

In addition to the rivers, &c., there are several wells on the Moor, especially Fice's Well, which is situated one mile and a half due north from the Prison. The spring is warm in winter, and cold in summer. The interior and sides are composed of granite, with initials and a date inscribed in relief at top, in letters about four inches high. The well itself measures three feet square by two feet and a half deep. The moorland tradition is, that the initials mean John or James Fice, a traveller, who, on some occasion experiencing great relief from the spring, gratefully protected it, as it now appears. The date 1168 is an extraordinary one, and the whole bears the undeniable appearance of great antiquity.

NOTE 6, Page 10.

*The magic hand
Of Cultivation.*

Many parts of the Moor, however irreclaimable they may seem to the prejudiced, are not naturally so barren as to be out of the reach of improvement. To use another passage of the text (page 11,)

*The future beams
With hope's inspiring ray.*

That the Moor was once cultivated is evident from the traces of furrows or ridges, and stone enclosures, still remaining upon and around it; and from the lower layer of thatch in the roofs of its old buildings being rye straw, which probably was the grain then raised.

Prime samples of wheat have been often obtained from the Moor, and Vancouver mentions a Winchester bushel at Bridestow as weighing 67lbs. and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. It likewise produces fine hay, excellent potatoes, black oats, seeded with clover, heaver, trefoil, &c., barley, turnips, cabbages, if planted tolerably early and well manured, flax, particularly in a dry summer; and Mr. Shillibeer is of opinion that it would answer for vetches and mangel worzel, if properly managed, and that, with respect to all these crops, Dartmoor depends (and what soil does not?) on "good management, plentiful manure, and early tillage."

At Two Bridges Inn, which lies in a valley at the junction of the roads from Moreton and Ashburton to Tavistock, there are a few fields and gardens in a thriving state, although nearly about the centre of the Moor; whose northern and western vicinities are peculiarly favourable to the breeding of black cattle and oxen, which, after being fattened in the rich pastures of Somerset, are sent to Smithfield market. On the Moor and the adjacent wastes, excepting in the bogs, large flocks of sheep and other cattle are depastured. At Widdicombe alone, in October, 1807, there were 14,000 sheep, besides horned cattle.

Already, as before mentioned, a good road exists from Moreton to Tavistock, with branches to Ashburton and Plymouth, for which an act was passed in 1772, chiefly through the exertions of Mr. Turner, then steward to the Duke of Bedford. The late Mr. Heywood of Maristowe, joined that road at Two Bridges from the Rock on Roborough Down. The principal improvers have been the Rev. Mr. Vollans, upon 3,000 acres, the late Sir Francis Buller, who held about 2,000 acres, and planted 40,000 trees, Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, who has 2,000 acres, the Rev. Mr. Bray, the holder of 900 acres, the Rev. Mr. Mason, of 600 acres, Thomas Sanders, Esq., and the late Mr. Gullet, who was a great improver, and built the farming part of the house at Prince Hall, (then one of the ancient tenements and a ruin of some former building) the better apartments being added by Sir

Francis Buller, the next possessor, who inclosed the best of the ground which has been improved, and some extensive new takes, and built the Inn at Two Bridges. July 26, 1822, an act was passed enabling His Majesty to make leases for absolute terms for 99 years, for building on and improving waste lands, parcels of the Duchy. Messrs. Thomas and John Hullett were improvers, having purchased grants made by the Duchy to Mr. Patterson and others, which on the death of Mr. Thomas Hullett, were sold to the Rev. Mr. Vollans. Messrs. Hullett built Post Bridge, and had a large estate in its vicinity.

What has been thus effected affords a manifest proof, not only of considerable attendant advantages, but of the perfect practicability of doing more. In the wastes surrounding the Moor, barrenness is gradually disappearing and softening into verdure and fertility. By judicious measures sterility might be wholly banished, excepting where the peat earth lies immediately upon the granite rock. The soil of the neighbouring vales is of superior quality, and consists of rich friable loams ; and even on the Moor itself are spots forming oases, as it were, in a desert, and highly susceptible of useful conversion.

Joshua Hepworth, Esq., agent for the Rev. Mr. Vollans, a gentleman possessed of much agricultural experience, considers the land and climate of Dartmoor as not worse than those of the Yorkshire Wolds, and

yet the whole of them are nearly enclosed and well cultivated, and no part of England produces finer sheep or fleeces. Turnips, rapes, corn, and barley mixed with clover prosper there abundantly, so that the sheep have a succession of food both summer and winter, and the land, at the same time, derives material benefit from the number of them maintained upon it. Mr. Hepworth recommends the incorporation of the Dartmoor and Leicestershire breeds, as a good mode of increasing the weight and wool of the former and lessening their rambling propensity.

To bring about a like result on Dartmoor it would be expedient :—

1. To remove the rocks and stones with which the surface is so profusely cumbered.

2. To construct a canal for receiving the superfluous moisture, and meanwhile to drain the bogs only (upon the principle hereafter stated,) for the sweet sward of the sound soil does not require draining.

3. To use lime without stinting which, by a fermentative process, assists in decomposing the brown spongy or upper stratum, nourishes at the same time, and, as Mr. Shillibeer forcibly remarks, “alters the very face of nature.” By draining, exiccating, paring, burning, and liming, all the bogs, even the red ones, which are worse than the others, might be

reduced to cultivation. The substratum of Dartmoor, a white, yellow, or brown clay, called formould, is so stiff and retentive of moisture that it cannot soak away, which occasions bogs. Limestone might be had, with proper roads, from Bridestow, Okehamp-ton, Holne, Buckfastleigh, and Plymouth, via Rail-way, and calcined in kilns built at convenient spots and distances.

4. To make firm substantial roads across the Moor, and bridges over brooks and rivers to facilitate communications.

5. To fold sheep, which would enrich and refine the herbage, and to compress and roll it.

6. To colonize the Moor, erect cottages for labourers, with sheltered stables and courts for cattle, and to form the whole into a separate parish, divided into villages or hamlets, with chapels or churches to each.

7. To irrigate mossy and spongy parts, not absolute bogs, with water, which has been often applied with a beneficial result.

8. To continue the kilns (first introduced by Sir Francis Buller, and followed by Sir Thomas Tyr-whitt,) for reducing the turf, or peat to ashes, and use them as a manure (which is kindly to potatoes, black oats, and turnips,) in combination with lime or

dung. Occasionally a reddish kind of clay on the Moor has been used as a top dressing, and the granitic gravel itself is not adverse to apple trees, if sheltered from the Moor winds, (which are usually south-westerly or south-easterly, and injurious to vegetation in general) nor to barley and turnips. Sea sand is a particularly valuable dressing.

9. To plant upon an extensive scale, thickly and not by rule, with due protections or barriers against the prevailing winds and cattle. Rhododendrons, azaleas, phyllyreas, aliturnases, arbutuses, and many other evergreens of the same kind, are suited to the peaty soil, which is in request with the gardeners of Plymouth for encouraging the growth of them in nurseries.

10. To diminish the depth of peat earth in some parts of the Moor, and convey the same to other parts, where the soil is less favourable to vegetation. The common depth of peat earth is from one to two feet, but in the vicinity of the Prison it is many feet.

Mr. Brown once contemplated the conversion of peat turf into gas, first shewn by the experiments of Mr. (since the Rev.) John Shillibeer, of Walkhampton, in filling the bole of a pipe with peat turf, terminated at top with a layer of clay, and then putting the bole in fire, by which the peat was formed into coke whence a gas issued at the tube, producing, on appli-

cation of a candle, a very pure and vivid flame ; and, when turned into coke or charcoal, made by heaping up piles of turf and setting them on fire, it is useful in manufacturing iron, to which it imparts a particular tenacity or toughness without any blisters, in constructing wires for musical instruments, there being no sulphur, in tempering edge tools, and smelting ores. Most of the smiths in and about the Moor employ it in their furnaces. In Germany the peat of Perleberg is used for burning lime and the above purposes.

The plan of draining, before adverted to, is that of Mr. Vancouver. Outfall drains, with proper sluices made so as to receive water from foot drains, one spit wide and one spit deep, at right angles to and parallel with outfall drains, intersecting each other, about a rod apart, over entire surface of bog. On escape of water the morass would grow gradually more consistent at top, and then the foot drains should be deepened, enlarged, and prepared for subsequent inclosure. When firm enough to support a yoke of oxen, the paring plough should be applied two, three, and even four times successively in reducing the spongy substance, which must be burnt. The drains to be deepened in proportion as the surface lowers and becomes more solid. After the fourth paring and burning, rape or cole seed to be sown therein, in July, upon the ashes spread abroad, about half a peck per acre, without ploughing and harrowing. By repeated pa-

rings and burnings the ground would be fitted for crops of cole seed, turnips, flax, potatoes, cabbages, peas, beans, and every sort of leguminous vegetable, to which might be added oats, hemp, ray, and other grasses, until the soil is reduced to within a foot or fifteen inches of the natural stratum below. Proper at times to incorporate some of under stratum with surface. The depasturable parts to be relieved of water by foot drains crossing each other at two or three rods apart, and the water conducted into outfall drains.

The Rev. Mr. Jones of North Bovey, recommends the introduction of florin grass, *agrostis stolonifera*, as well suited for the Moor.

In the 55th year of his late Majesty, an act was passed for "vesting in the crown certain parts of the forest of Exmoor, and for inclosing the said forest." Why might not a similar means be adopted with respect to Dartmoor?

Another act was passed for inclosing Ilsington Common, May 20, 1809.

NOTE 7, Page 11.

The railway leads its mazy track.

This undertaking was first projected by Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, of Tor Royal, for the cultivation of the Moor, and the application of its granite to architectural and other purposes. In the earlier part of 1818, Sir Thomas, having matured his plans, submitted them to a special meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, at Plymouth, and they being viewed with a favourable eye by that useful body, Sir Thomas published them in a pamphlet.

He next exerted himself in obtaining subscribers, with peculiar success, to the extent of £27,783, being the estimated expense under the first act (passed July 2nd, 1819) for carrying the road from Dartmoor to Crabtree, and under which they were incorporated as the Plymouth and Dartmoor Railway Company.

On the 20th of September, in the same year, the first general meeting of the proprietors took place, when a managing Committee was elected, and Sir William Elford, Bart., appointed Treasurer, the Writer of this Note, Clerk, and George Day Wood, Collector, Mr. William Stuart, Superintendant of the Plymouth Breakwater Works, being Engineer, and Mr. Hugh Mackintosh, of London, Contractor for

forming the road, and Messrs. Bailey and Co., of the same place, Contractors for supplying the iron.

It being found necessary to make a branch from Craintree to Sutton Pool, Plymouth, an act was solicited and passed July 8th, 1820, for that purpose, the estimated expense of which amounted to £7,200.

Some parts of the line being considered as improvable, by varying it, and excavating a tunnel at Leigham, on the lands of the late Addis Archer, Esq., another act was applied for and passed July 2nd, 1821, with the additional estimate of £5,000.

Thus, in three years, three acts were procured, and under their authority three several sums of £27,783, £7,200, and £5,000, (together £39,983,) raised, principally by the influence of Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, who himself subscribed upwards of £3,000, to whom followed Sir Masseh Lopes, Bart., as the next largest subscriber.

The total length of the line, from Prince Town to Sutton Pool, is 25 miles, 2 quarters, and 6 chains ; and it is now used in conveying up lime, coals, timber, &c. and taking back granite and other articles. The tunnel on Higher Leigham estate is in the twentieth mile from Prince Town, and admeasures in length 620 yards, in height 9 feet 6 inches, and in breadth 8 feet 6 inches, its greatest depth under ground being

109 feet, and with the rest of the road was opened for public use, with a procession, September, 26, 1823.

Language is incompetent to describe the grandeur and beauty of the scenery through which the railway passes.

NOTE 8, Page 12.

Yon mighty Tors.

The Rev. J. H. Mason, the worthy incumbent of Widdicombe, and Mr. Shillibeer, of Walkhampton, persons better acquainted with Dartmoor than, perhaps, any other men living, state the most remarkable tors as follows :—In the north quarter, Cosdon, Cawson, or Cosson hill, Little Hound, Great Hound, Steeperton, Wild, Watern, Kit, Far or Fur, Brat or Braddon, Hampster, South Lynx, North Lynx, Dunningoat, Stenga or Sourton, High Willow, Three Mil, Row or Rough, Yes, Arm, and Belston tors. In the east quarter, Thurstone, Stone, Sittaford or Siddaford, Bear or Baredown, Man, Waydon, the Three White, another Row or Rough, the Three Longford or Longaford, Crockern or 'Tinnors' Parliament, Belliver or Bellaford, Laughter, Arch, Braddon, Hartland, and Cherrybrook tors. In the south quarter, Knattleborough, Huntingdon, Western Whittaborough or

Peter's Cross, Fox, Avenhead, and Eastern Whittaborough Tors. In the west quarter, Ellisborough, South Essery or Hisworthy, Royal, North Essery, or Hisworthy, or Prison, Strane, the Three Bear or Baredown, Lydford, Cowsic, Coniesdown, Great and Little Mis, of which Mis-tor Pan are very high and large, Limborough or Huntsborough, and Grins tors.

Colonel Mudge, in his Trigonometrical Survey of Devon, mentions the greater part of the foregoing, but enumerates many more :—as Yar, Shipley, Lecdon, Cumston Hare, Warren, Great Mid and Little Staple, Black, Shillstone, Doe, Charbe, Scorhill, King, Feather, Leigh, Vixen, Tes, Eastdown, Loughton, Hookner, Pa, Troulsworthy, Brai, Rippon, Hallow, Sampford, Granate, Littlebee, Harrow, Binjay or Benjie, Hey or High, Thornworthy, Hock, Lug, Saddle, Brazen, Gran, Down, Leather, Two Sharp, Quarnian, Holwell, Rival, Bog, Lints, Louge, Scarey, Hamiltontown, Rolls, Collard, Three Har- ters, Rayborrow, Devils, Shop, Cocks, Sharper, Crip, Dinger, Littorally, and Great tors.

In addition to all these, there are Crip, Tuga, Swell, Blacket, Hatzel, Hayle, Clit, Narra, Ham, Pen, Bench, Quarnell, another Hound near Ilsington, Two Brent, another King near North Bovey, the King noticed by Colonel Mudge being near Walkhampton, Bot, Bag, Bel, Cox, another Vixen near Tavistock, Hel, Three Barrow, and Sheep's tors.

Of the whole it has been found impracticable to gather particulars; although, in the language of Lucan, "*Nullum est sine nomine saxum*," but, as to the larger proportion, that is all. They have braved the elements and ruthless time ever since the deluge; but their names, and the adamantine materials of which they are composed, alone survive. In strictness, but comparatively few of them, and those mostly the tors named by Mr. Mason and Mr. Shillibeer, are on the Moor. The others lie at greater or less distances all around it.

Hound tor, near Ilsington, comes within the latter description, which the Rev. Mr. Jones, in his interesting observations on Moretonhampstead and Dartmoor, eloquently describes as "a magnificent group of rocks, like the remains of some ruined castle, rising in the horizon with its beetling front from the dreary plain; its toppling crags having the appearance of pinnacles, which the hand of time has loosened; and as it throws its dark shade across the heath, it increases the natural wildness of the desolate downs, in the midst of which it is situated." Near it is Hound tor wood, containing Beckey waterfall.

Fox tor has been connected, by tradition, with Child the Hunter. (For a metrical version of this tradition see the Miscellaneous Poems in Vol. II)

Rippen tor is placed 1549 feet above the sea.

From Mil tor are seen Benjie, Yar, and Quarnell tors.

At Bag tor, is a seat of Lord Ashburton, with woods, where was born, in 1586, John Ford, the dramatic writer, whence sprung the family of the same name and place.

King tor, near Walkhampton, is worked as a granite quarry.

Cox tor stands near the centre of the parish of Peter Tavy, commanding the rich vale of Tavistock, and overlooking the whole country to Plymouth harbour.

Hey or High tor is singularly grand in its aspect, especially when illumed by the rising sun, and may be descried at an amazing distance. It consists of a double peak, or two large but separate obelisks, with steps cut for ascending each, rearing themselves aloft to some height above the summit of a lofty ridge, and embracing a most sublime and diversified view of heaths, woods, rocks, meadows, rivers, towns, villages, the sea off Teignmouth, and the coast as far as the cliffs of Dorset; in which are comprehended, immediately beneath the eye, Bovey Heathfield, the granite railway of John Templer, Esq., of Stover, and the silvery meanders of the Teign. On the top of the tallest peak there is a rock basin, and on the

slope below once oscillated a logan stone, which has disappeared. This tor, at one time, was known by the appellation of Ather tor, which is more appropriate than its present one of High tor, as Rippen tor, near it, is higher and perfectly overlooks it. It is celebrated for its peat or blackwood, and the rarity of its mosses and lichens.

Bot tor, near Hennock, has oak trees growing in its clefts, and at its foot are hollows, like caverns, lined with *byssus aurea*, which, according to De Luc, at particular spots and in certain lights, displays a very glittering appearance, of a greenish hue.

Some of the tors, as High tor, South Brent tor, Three Barrow tor, Sharp tor, Hamil tor, and Cawson downs, were formerly beacons or fire towers, which the word tor itself in the Celtic and other languages, implies; and anciently there were watchings and wardings of the beacons, as is evinced by a record, dated 1626, of the customs, ancient privileges, and freedom of the manor of Sheepstor, with a sight of which the writer has been favoured; but, provincially, tors are called clatters. The Rev. Mr. Polwhele imagines some of them to be extinct volcanoes; but this is not supported by facts, although there are certainly a few tors of a conical shape. With much more probability certain of them, as Lynx, Bear, Dunnagoat, Fox, Doe, Hare, Conies, Sheep, and

Hound tors, are so called from the respective animals of those names.

NOTE 9, Page 13.

*The civic wreath
Tyrwhitt is thine.*

A preceding note plainly demonstrates the merits of Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, as will that on Dartmoor Prison : but these are not his only merits. In every thing connected with the welfare of the Moor he took an active and indefatigable part. In 1785 he first commenced his operations on the very worst part of the forest, which, by dint of expense, draining, and sowing artificial grasses, he considerably amended. The cultivation of flax being begun by Mr. Sanders, Sir Thomas followed the example with such success as to receive a medal from the Bath Agricultural Society. Tor Royal was entirely formed by him in 1798, with its adjoining fields, plantations, and garden, to which there was no road when he undertook the work ; but he soon made one, as well as another for uniting the Plymouth with the Tavistock road. In short, to Sir Thomas all the modern improvements on Dartmoor must be referred.

NOTE 10, Page 15.

Sweet Lara.—Saltram's pensile woods.

Three objects require to be noticed; namely, the charms of the Lara, the groves of Saltram lying on its banks, and the pier at its western end.

The Lara is an expanse, at the estuary of the river Plym, caused by an arm of the sea, and, when viewed from certain spots, has the deceptive appearance of a lake; but it is connected with Catwater, one of the harbours of the Port of Plymouth, and the receptacle, at its upper part, of the river Plym. Its appellation is rather curious; the *larus* or gull, that numerously frequents its waters, is the most probable etymology.

Saltram, the seat of the Earl of Morley, stands at a little distance from the eastern shore of the Lara, environed by woods, which skirt the southern side nearly as far as the iron bridge, erected across the lower or western end, and which, from their growing on a declivity, have appropriately received the epithet *pensile*.

The pier, at the western end of the Lara, is admirably suited for loading granite, there being depth of water enough for vessels of some burthen, the rail-

way passing close to it, and the bridge lying above it. The workshops and storehouses are conveniently arranged in its immediate vicinity, and it certainly would be difficult to meet any where with a place better adapted for the granite trade.

NOTE 11, Page 17.

The sylvan Plym.

To form this river, on which the text has properly bestowed the epithet sylvan, the Meavy and Cad, two other rivers, unite their waters, at Shaugh Bridge; but, with a remarkable peculiarity, they there lose their respective names for the name of Plym, although on the Moor there is a spring or source called Plym Head, whence it might be conjectured that an original stream of that name there arises and takes its course towards the sea, which does not appear, as far as the writer's researches have gone, to be the fact, unless, as supposed by Mr. Shillibeer, the Cad is the Plym under an altered name. Under this single appellation they flow peaceably together, bestowing it, as they proceed, upon the hundred of Plymton, the town of Plymton Earle or Plymton Maurice, the parish of Plymton St. Mary, the village of Plymstock, and the port and town of Plymouth. Immediately after their junction, their track lies in a

succession of wooded vales, amongst which is Bickleigh Vale, (so poetically sung by Mr. Howard) by Cann Quarry, the property of the earl of Morley, through his Lordship's plantations, into the Lara, and thence to join the Tamar in Plymouth Sound.

NOTE 12, Page 20.

The breeze of Roborough.

The appearance of this rock, as the passenger travels from Plymouth to Tavistock or Dartmoor, is exceedingly impressive, particularly when it is half veiled by the shadows of evening; and, although no such fact is recorded, it may be considered as likely, in superstitious times, to have been applied to some religious worship. In Dunn's old Map of Devon, it is called Ulster or Ullestor Rock, but scarcely ever so denominated in the present day. The rock itself consists of strata of gneiss, and the points around emerging from the surface are of the same kind. The down on which it stands bears the appellation of Roborough down, and belongs to Sir Ralph Lopes, the principal part lying within the manor of Buckland Monachorum, the remainder within the manor of Bickleigh, and the whole containing about 2,000 acres. In remote times it is possible that this down formed part of Dartmoor, and was dismembered from it as a

purlieu. At present the inclosures intervening between Roborough down and Dartmoor are numerous and obviously of some standing. From most parts of the down the Moor may be descried with all its characteristic features.

Close to the down are the grounds of Sir William Elford, Bart., which display considerable taste in their arrangement, without despoiling Nature of her beauties; and on the down itself, near Jump, lies Roborough House, the property of Sir Ralph Lopes.

NOTE 13, Page 26.

Brent Tor uprushes.

There are two tors of this name, one called North Brent tor, about three miles north-west of Tavistock the other South Brent tor near Ashburton. Both are very remarkable objects, and the former in particular, with its church at the top, may be perceived at sea at a distance of twenty miles or more, and forms a useful guide to mariners for entering Plymouth Sound.

“ A great sea-mark
And saving those that eye him.”

It is asserted, in the Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. lxxv. 911. to be an extinct volcano; and, looking at its

conical shape, coupled with the porosity of the rock itself, some of which appears to have been used in the walls of Lidford castle, the assertion, on the whole may not be improbable. The church and surrounding yard, in which there is hardly earth sufficient for burying the dead, nearly occupy the apex, the church being 37 feet long by 14 wide, and the yard even of less dimensions. Though so elevated, a spring of water causes both to be very damp. The tradition as to the church is, that a merchant, exposed to a violent storm, vowed to build a church to St. Michael, if his life was spared, and this tor having been the means of directing the steersman into harbour, the vow was duly performed by the erection of this structure,

“Immotamque coli dedit et contemnere ventos.”

Virgil, Æn. Lib. iii.

which is still resorted to as a place of worship by a few who have health and vigour enough to ascend the acclivity.

In a cottage, at the foot of Brent tor, resided for a long time Sarah Williams, who, in 1809, was aged 109 years, and who never lived farther out of the parish of North Brent than the one adjoining. She had 12 children and a few years before her death cut five new teeth.

South Brent tor has also been rather a place of note. On its summit there were large stones, attributed to

the Druids, and by some supposed to be the remains of a military station, used in later periods as a beacon. In the dreadful storm of November, 1824, they were blown down and scattered far apart from each other.

In the surrounding fields the sonorous, petrosilex, or clink stone of Werner is found, and in the Philosophical Transactions, Vol. v. No. 23, an account is given of the discovery there of a loadstone weighing sixty pounds. Recently, near Ashburton, smaller specimens have occurred with garnets. Risdon states the loadstone as being met with at Sotwardstone, in the parish of South Brent, and Wescott speaks of a mine, or rather quarry, of the same stone at Brent. Manganese presents itself in the neighbourhood of North Brent tor, and is extensively worked by Mr. Herring.

At Norreis, near South Brent, was born the celebrated Sir John Fortescue, Lord Chief Justice and Lord High Chancellor of England, author of *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, &c.

NOTE 14, Page 35.

*On my path
Profusely springs Erica.*

'This elegant shrub abounds on the Moor; but, however beautiful, it is prejudicial to the improve-

ment of the soil, and difficult to be eradicated, which is practicable only by deep ploughing, paring, and burning, and then spreading the ashes. For this purpose large heaps of the stroil are often kindled on the heights, which at night blaze splendidly to the distant eye. But it is further useful in another capacity. By the rotting of the old plants, peat and peat earth are generated; the former of the first importance to the inhabitants of the Moor, for making fires, where no other fuel can be had, and the latter exceedingly favourable to the growth of vegetables generally, and to the crops raised on the Moor in particular. The name of *erica*, given in the text is the botanic one; but it is commonly termed *ling* in most parts of England, from the Danish *lyne*; in Shropshire, *grig*; in Scotland, *heather*, from the German *thiede* (but Shakspeare treats *ling* and *heather* or *heath* as different) in Sweden *luing*; in Italy, *erica*; in Spain, *brezo*; in Portugal *urse*, *erice*, and *torga*; and in Russia, *weresk*. There are three kinds of *erica* on the Moor, *erica tetralla*, *erica cineria*, and *erica vulgaris*; the last being that herein described.

The Whortleberry (*vaccinium myrtillus*) is a pleasing attendant of the *erica*, and not without charms as a shrub, or use as a wholesome article of food. Fuller calls it *hurt berry*, which appellation it still bears. Virgil, in his second eclogue, mentions it under the name of "*vaccinia nigra*."

NOTE 15, Page 38.

*How silent that proud pile, where England held
Within her victor grasp the vanquish'd foe !*

However afflictive to humane feelings to behold a large edifice specially constructed for the incarceration of man, yet Dartmoor prison must be pronounced as one excellently adapted for this painful object. Perhaps it is the first thing of the kind in the world. Sir Thomas, (then Mr.) Tyrwhitt had the merit of originating the idea, and the prisons of Plymouth being very old and inconvenient, government espoused it, and adopted the plan of Mr. Alexander, the first stone being laid by Sir Thomas, March 20, 1806. Granite taken from the Moor is the principal material, and the whole, including some later additions cost about £127,000. Two of the prisons, a row of houses for subordinate officers, the walls of the chapel, and the parsonage house, were erected by French, and the interior of the chapel fitted up by American prisoners, who received a daily gratuity for their trouble ; government, with a sympathy for these unhappy victims of ruthless war, which deserves the highest praise, kindly permitting them, by this and other modes of employment, both in and out of the walls, to alleviate the tedium of their captivity and increase their private comforts.

The establishment comprises a circular admeasure-

ment of 30 acres, inclosed on its eastern, northern, and southern directions, by a lofty wall, and on the western part or front, which completes, or rather, being straight, obtunds the circumference, by two handsome residences appropriated to the agent and surgeon, and having between them a cyclopiàn gateway, surmounted with the motto, "*Parcere subjectis,*" and two side walls. Within, fronting this gateway, but at some distance from it, which leaves room for more dwellings and offices lying immediately behind the houses of the agent and surgeon, besides a considerable space for air and exercise, is another gateway connected with other buildings, and a wall running directly across from north to south, so as to form a second barrier parallel with the first or front, but of course longer. Within again, in a line with the two before-mentioned gateways, and at nearly the same distance from the second as the second is from the first, which admits of another space for air and exercise is a third entrance, with folding gates on each side, connected as the preceding barriers, with a wall and other buildings; but this third barrier unlike them, does not stretch quite across, or, in other words, join the outer wall on each side, but stops short of it at some distance, and thence continuing the same distance, goes round so as to compose a semi-circular walled inclosure, or third space for air and exercise, altogether detached from the outer wall, but within it, and having a palisade railing inside and flights of steps up the wall, with sentry boxes upon

it all the way round ; in addition to which there are three guard houses, at the east, west and south. Still within, at about the like distance as the first, second, and third barriers from each other, is a fourth barrier extending from side to side of the semicircle, consisting partly of a wall and partly of iron palisades, in which is another entrance surmounted by G. R. A spectator, on looking in at the first or front barrier entrance, may see all these four barrier entrances immediately succeeded in a line before him one after the other, respectively separated by areas. At length, after passing through this fourth barrier, the prison, properly so called, is reached, and here are seen seven buildings, each 300 feet long and 50 wide, capable together of holding 9,600 men, or more at one time, and containing two floors for double tiers of hammocks suspended on cast iron pillars, and a third tier in the roof for use in fine weather.

Without perplexity it is hardly possible to describe every single building and office, but independent of what is above described, there are a barrack for 18 officers and 484 non-commissioned officers and privates, a separate accommodation for 400 men in the prisons, a cachot or solitary place of confinement for refractory offenders, an hospital, hot and cold baths, a house for drying clothes, and other superior arrangements, all thoroughly supplied with excellent water from an inexhaustible reservoir outside the front entrance, filled by a diverted part of the river Walk-

ham. Outside the external or circular wall, but communicating with the area or space lying between that wall and the wall environing the semicircular inclosure, at one time, bells were hung all the way round, conducting to a large bell at the front entrance, to give an alarm in case of attempts at escape in foggy weather.

At a certain period of the war 10,000 prisoners were within the walls, and multifariously ingenious were the methods by which they endeavoured to kill time. When that vast ship, the *Commerce-de-Marseille*, lay as a prison depot in Hamoaze, she was, in the words of one of the captives, "a little floating world," and had on board an excellent band of music, a theatre, ball room, gaming tables, fencing and other schools, workshops, &c. But gaming, above all, was carried to an extent, scarcely ever exceeded. Prisoners were known to wander about the decks without any other covering than a blanket, having lost all their clothes at cards or dice. Even instances happened of some staking several days provision, and undergoing an almost total deprivation of food, until "the debt of honour," was discharged.

Looking at the elevated site of the prison, which is at least 1,400 feet above the sea, unfavourable consequences to the health of the prisoners might have been anticipated; but returns to parliament by no means confirm the supposition. From May 29, 1809, to

April 22, 1814, 12,679 persons underwent confinement there, of whom died 1,095 French and 22 Americans, or 1,117 altogether, being a less mortality than in any English town with the same population in the same time. The number of prisoners. April 30, 1810 was 5,534, of whom were in health 5,269, leaving only 85 sick. The number, June 11, 1811, was 6,320 of whom 6,280 were in health, and only 27 sick. From May, 1809 to June 1811, the greatest number of deaths in one month, January 1810, was 131, and the least, 3 in the same period of time, August 1809.

The natural result of such an establishment was a chapel, parsonage house, inn, and the gradual formation of a small town near, comprising about 30 houses and called, in honour of the Prince of Wales, (his late Majesty George IV.) Prince Town, for which Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, with his wonted regard for the welfare of Dartmoor, procured the privileges of holding a market and a fair. The chapel and parsonage house lie a little way apart from the front of the prison. The former is 60 feet long by 40 wide, and was first opened for divine service in 1815, which is continued; the parish church of Lydford, being 12 or 13 miles distant, though burials and christenings must still be performed there. It is capable of accommodating 500 persons. The chaplain is appointed and paid by government, and the Rev. J. H. Mason, was the original and is the present incumbent. The chapel, tower, parsonage house

and prison are prominent objects at a considerable distance.

It was, not long since, intended to occupy the prison with convicts for improving the Moor, and subsequently a school of industry was projected, for which purpose a public meeting took place in 1820, when Mr. Brougham had the honour of stating, at the desire of the King, a princely donation by his Majesty of £1000, and an offer to grant part of the waste. The children were to be orphans, rescued from the vice, infamy and ruin of the metropolitan streets. Why one or the other of these measures has not been effected, the writer is unable to explain; but, surely, it is better that the prison should be so tenanted than merit the name of "silent pile," conferred on it in the text. At another time Mr. Brown applied for permission to convert it into a peat-gas depot, but that design also seems to have been abandoned.

NOTE 16, Page 47.

The azure-blossom'd flax.

According to Campbell, flax was one of the principal commodities of Devon, and the trials of it on the Moor, by Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, and Mr. Sanders of

Exeter, fully warrant the expectation, that it might be again successfully and more extensively cultivated. In 1817 or 1818, during an unusually dry summer, the former planted it at Tor Royal, and had an ample produce. In the following year he repeated the experiment; but the weather not being so favourable, the return was less. The metropolitan school being then contemplated, he kept the flax with the view of having it manufactured by the children; but the design unfortunately fell to the ground. In 1819, R. R. Sanders, esq., the present owner of Brimps, on the East Dart, sowed, without impoverishing the soil, 24 acres to flax, with a slight admixture of lime, some of which was of excellent staple, and by the aid of a person conversant with the subject, prepared for spinning. The late Joseph Sanders, esq., this gentleman's father, was decidedly of opinion that "thousands of acres in the forest of Dartmoor are well adapted for the growth of flax and hemp." Sir George Yonge, bart., was a particular friend to the same cultivation, and introduced a bill since repealed, for granting a bounty to the growers of flax; and he afterwards applied, but ineffectually, to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the purpose of reviving the bill, which is equally expedient as ever, the woollen trade having declined, and the linen trade offering itself as a promising substitute. The best mode of rearing flax on Dartmoor is on old ground, after paring and burning the sward, and letting it lie fallow for some time. The Dutch raise flax on the

stiff clay of Zealand. In France any soil is indiscriminately chosen for cultivating it, and every cottage has a patch of hemp for domestic uses. In Switzerland the most mountainous districts are appropriated to flax. In Ireland a bounty was given on the importation of flax and hemp seed, the seed distributed gratis amongst the poor, and the freedom of corporations bestowed on flax and hemp dressers. The profit to the grower may be estimated at £10 per acre, besides affording employment and subsistence to the industrious. In time, by an adoption of the like means, every moorman might have a plot of flax or hemp, and this would consequently lead to a linen manufacture.

Some author has remarked that hemp and flax grow naturally on the Moor; but the Rev. Mr. Jones, to whom the writer has applied on this point, says, "Hemp is not a British plant, and therefore cannot be found naturally growing on the Moor. I never observed flax growing wild there."

NOTE 17, Page 48.

Deserted Crockern.

This tor, so well known to antiquaries, though few of them perhaps have seen it, stands at the back of a

cottage and estate belonging to the Rev. J. H. Mason, about a mile distant from Two-Bridges, in the east quarter of the Moor, of which it is reputed by some to be the centre. The president or judge's chair, part of the bench for the jurors, and three irregular steps for ascending, are still partially visible; but, either by the course of time or spoliation, it has become dilapidated, and report affirms the latter, ascribing it to the late Sir Francis Buller, or Mr. Thomas Leaman, one of whom is said to have taken away a large thin table of granite, of which stone the whole is formed, and removed it to Dunnabridge estate, near prince Hall; but, on strict enquiry, particularly of the sexton of Prince Town Chapel, who has resided more than 40 years on the Moor, there is strong reason for disbelieving the report or rather calumny.

Crockern tor must always command respect as an interesting relic of old British manners, and as a memorial of the Saxon Witena-gemot or earlier parliament of the realm, which, like the stannary parliament, as it is most commonly styled, was held in the open air. Near it are the remains of a paved track or causeway, said to lead to Widdicombe, and many years since part of a flint-stone was picked up there; but this, in all probability, was accidentally dropped by some visitor, as nothing of the same kind has been observed any where else on the Moor.

NOTE 18, Page 51.

————— *These roofless huts, these walls.*

————— *In these, once,*

The fierce Danmonii dwelt.

That Dartmoor and its borders were once rather thickly inhabited agrees with tradition, and is obvious from the many remains of round houses, standing singly, but more or less near each other, generally on the sides of hills, built of unwrought stones placed upon each other, in the simplest manner, without cement, having entrances, but now devoid of roofs, and varying in diameter, the largest being about twelve feet. The Rev. Mr. Fosbrook, in his curious work on Architectural Antiquities, gives the representation of a dwelling of the ancient Britons, which corresponds with the remains on the Moor, and to this people they must be attributed; in partial confirmation of which the authority of Cæsar may be cited, who says that the British houses were built singly; and besides, what other people can have erected them?

It is certain that the Phœnicians traded largely with the west of England, in which they could not but become acquainted with the abundance of tin on Dartmoor; and it is not at all unlikely, that they were even concerned there in streaming for it, with the aid of the natives, whom they taught to erect

dwellings on the spot. In our earlier annals are ample records of distracted times, when the poor Britons must have been glad to flee for refuge to their most inaccessible retreats, and Dartmoor amongst the number, particularly under the Saxon Heptarchy, when Cornwall or Anglo-Cornubia comprehended half the city of Exeter, Totnes, and all westward, possessed by the natives, until Athelstan drove them across the Tamar, thence assuming the title of king of all Britain; and as there are many erect stones, some inscribed and some not, on and near the Moor, it is possible that the Anglo-Cornubians there made a desperate struggle, and retired only inch by inch and that the stones perpetuate the memory of Athelstan's victorious advances. The Romans, after invading Britain, undeniably had permanent footing both in Devon and Cornwall, the natives retired before them into the extremities of the isle, and Dartmoor became their place of shelter. On these various occasions the Britons either occupied the dwellings already built or constructed more.

This, the writer hopes, is a far more rational conclusion than the conjecture, that these small and inconvenient houses were used for penning sheep and preserving them during night from wild beasts. How many, it might be asked would they hold? Their diminutive size is a sufficient reply. As the residences of shepherds or other natives they might have answered. They have also been confounded with

druidical circles, but the two differ most decidedly from each other. The druidical circles consist of erect stones, standing apart at regular intervals and not walled round, whilst the buildings referred to are not only themselves walled, but often enclosed by a wall.

The celebrated amphitheatre or oval mound of Grimspound has excited a great difference of opinion, and to what exact period to ascribe its first formation may be hard, if not impossible, to determine. Strabo, Pomponius Mela, and Tacitus, assert, that before the Roman invasion, the Britons had neither houses nor towns, but only ditches and banks, called fastnesses, which might appear adverse to the existence of houses as herein before supposed, the Phœnicians visiting Britain and trading with it long prior to the Roman invasion. Cæsar, however, the first invader, shows that he found houses, at that time, and why not? The Phœnicians were a civilized nation, and to the Britons of the west they doubtless taught some useful knowledge, especially that of sheltering themselves better from the elements. To the Phœnicians, then, or their instruction, may be properly ascribed the alteration of Grimspound from an earthy fortress, to a walled town, containing houses, which was thus simultaneously rendered a defensive station against enemies, a pen for cattle, and a place of settlement. The river flowing by its lower wall, the near proximity of

the Vittifer mines, the numerous streamworks up and down the valley, the site itself upon the side of Hamel down, above Widdicombe, the beacon, barrows, and trackways upon the down, all convincingly prove that it was a point of trading importance in the eyes of the Phœnicians and Britons, and improved accordingly; from the example of Grimspound other houses sprung up, of a similar kind, as streaming proceeded, but not protected in the same effectual way.

Grimspound admeasures four acres, and is filled with vestiges of rude houses, congregated together, more to the south than the north, but single, and inclosed by a wall, of loose uncemented stones, once apparently 12 feet high, and containing a few erect stones, three feet high, which the Rev. Mr. Polwhele pronounces druidical, and this might be warranted by the attachment of both the Phœnicians and Britons to that religion. A writer in Besley's Exeter paper supposes it to have been a temple of the sun. There are two entrances, north and south, with traces in each of stone pavement. The northern wall is a boundary between the parishes of North Bovey and Manaton, and in the valley flows Grimslake, a little stream. Grimstor and Grimsgrrove, in the vicinity, are farther memorials of the name of Grim, which was formerly a distinguished one, and not confined to this particular part. In Dorsetshire, crossing the Roman road, near Woodyates Inn, from Old Sarum

to Dorchester, there is a place called Grimsditch ; and in Stirlingshire, Scotland, Graham's dyke or Grames dyke, (originally the wall of Antoninus) Grame or Græme, having the same meaning as Graham, who was a pre-eminent hero in that country, and is said by Boethius to have been the first to make a breach in that wall after the departure of the Romans. Mr. Polwhele also imagines Grimspound to have been a seat of judicature for the cantred of Durius or the Dart, and Crockern tor for that of Tamar. That the latter was devoted to the administration of the stannary laws there can be no doubt ; and the former, if a town, must necessarily have had some legal authority, extending probably over the Moor, but not further. The cantreds of Durius and Tamar are of disputable existence.

Three miles east of Two Bridges, at Lakehead-hill, is Lakehead-circle, two acres in area, surrounded by a wall three feet thick, and proportionably high.

In the Moor, between Gidleigh and Cosson, are some low stone walls extending up hill, and adjoining three circular inclosures, with entrances, the whole taking a triangular shape. Stream-works are visible in the neighbourhood of both, and therefore they may have been of the same nature as Grimspound, but not so well known.

For some time Grimspound was used as a pound

for confining estrays taken on driving the Moor, but latterly Dunnabridge pound only, another place of antient origin, close to Prince Hall, has been so employed. There were other pounds, as Holstock, Fallen-down, Kreber and Arme, the two last of which are susceptible of repair.

NOTE 19, Page 51.

*That hale and happy age, which blesses still
His vigorous descendants.*

The air of Dartmoor being healthful and bracing, its inhabitants, commonly called moorsmen, are, as a natural consequence, famed for strength and longevity, as well as for considerable skill in the art of wrestling, although occasionally in the deeper vallies typhus fever has prevailed. The Rev. Mr. Jones, speaking of them in one of his pamphlets, truly remarks:—"The Moor farmers live very hard, have none of the luxuries, hardly the conveniences of life, and cultivate with great labour the few acres around their habitations. They are, however, used to the climate, become attached to the soil, and being only acquainted with the society that surrounds them, they never think of extending the sphere of their operations."

"Patient of labour, with a little pleased."

The moormen derive a humble, but to them a sufficient maintenance, by digging and curing peat fuel, which is chiefly sent to the South Hams, by jobbing with cattle, and attending markets, by planting and selling oats, turnips, potatoes, cabbages, &c. Some of the women in the vicinities of Ivy Bridge and Ashburton employ themselves in collecting sedge upon the Moor, and convey it afoot on their backs to Plymouth, a distance from the former place of more than twelve miles, and from the latter of twenty-five miles or upwards, to be made into mattrasses.

NOTE 20, Page 52.

Luxuriant forests rose.

The Rev. Mr. Jones, from a simple inspection of Wistman's Wood, united with the ill success hitherto experienced in raising trees on the Moor, contends, that it must always have been and always must be equally denuded as at present; but this is by no means a fair inference. If injudicious modes of planting have been practised, or proper care not taken of the plantations, those things alone would suffice to make every endeavour of that kind abortive, even in a good soil, and how much more in one confessedly indifferent? Many thousands of trees have perished from the want of shelter and the injurious plan of dig-

ging the pits, and from the same causes, of 40,000 trees, planted by the late Sir Francis Buller, on Prince Hall and Sherberton, the greater part have died or are decaying, except in some favoured spots. But that trees can be reared is evident at Brimps, where are fine ash, larch, &c., especially a handsome oak, and whence some have been sold as timber, and on Tor Royal and Swincombe, at which places Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt has flourishing plantations. On Bear Down estate, near the river Cowsic, a large number of firs, &c. was planted by the Rev. Edward Bray, which do well; and on Stover, the property of George Templar, esq., there are quantities of thriving Scotch firs and other trees, together with the Spanish or sweet chesnut, which show what may be done on a soil quite as unpropitious, in appearance, to planting as any in the Moor; the profit on them in 20 years is considerable.

Many of the spurs or ascending slopes to the Moor on the Okehampton side (in the park of which town was, until destroyed, a most valuable body of timber growing amid the granite rocks) are covered with dwarf oaks, which, when protected from cattle, attain a good height. The water-courses descending from the Moor, and the low grounds and hill sides towards the sea, are likewise partially bespread with woods, particularly the lower parts of Holne Chace, and the eastern side of the West Ockment river. At the feet of the high lands bordering on the Moor, in the

parishes of Moreton, Chagford, Gidley, and Throwsleigh, is found oak timber of some dimensions.

The Rev. Mr. Polwhele thinks that the Moor, in former times, was luxuriantly covered with wood; and every year, he says, young trees spring up spontaneously, but perish before they can rise high enough to escape the bites of cattle. Mr. Shillibeer, a competent judge of the capabilities of Dartmoor in every point, expressly declares, that in each of its four quarters several places exist adapted for planting. Generally, perhaps, it is not strictly favourable to the growth of timber; yet its peat earth, when neither too moist nor too dry, encourages vegetation, and, as before remarked, there is a most extensive use of it by Plymouth and other gardeners, for raising the arbutus, rhododendron, aliturnus, phyllyrea, &c.

It is easy to traverse the Moor, and, like the traveller from Dan to Beersheba, to cry, all is barren, this is hardly possible, that impossible, when at the very time every thing might be made possible with a sound exercise of reason and judgment. To ensure success in planting, it is necessary, first, to drain the land; next, to sink the pits deeper and wider, casting away the clayey substratum and re-occupying the space with peat earth, in which the roots of the young trees, finding nothing repulsive, might spread unchecked and take a firmer hold; thirdly, to plant thickly, so as the trees might mutually shelter each

other, and lastly, to protect the plantations for five or six years with stone walls or turf embankments, sufficiently high to keep out intruders. When a plantation to any extent is once established, by adding to it as desired, a spacious tract might gradually be covered, which would not only embellish the district itself, but absorb much of the superfluous moisture. The trees most proper for use are the Scotch, silver, black, red, and common spruce firs, stone cluster, and Weymouth, pines, pine aster, mountain and common ash, larch, birch, alder, holly, beech, sycamore of both kinds, elm, here and there, Spanish or sweet chesnut, cedar, oak, wychhazel, and larix, some of which will answer, (the Scotch and silver firs) even on a moist and clayey soil of the poorest kind, as at Blanchford, the seat of Sir John Lemon Rogers, bart., near Cornwood, where are some ancient trees, of extraordinary magnitude considering the soil.

Rear Admiral Brooking, of Plymouth, has suggested to the writer a cheap mode of planting. He recommends sixteen persons to join in this object upon a given quantity of ground, divided into as many plots, each occupied with trees preferred by the owner, and bounded from the next lot by a line of some particular tree, as, for instance, No. 1, filled with firs and bounded by larch, No. 2, with Weymouth pines and bounded by ash, &c. The whole to be hedged in with a substantial fence.—At sundry times the trunks, branches, and roots, even the leaves of trees, chiefly oak and birch, have been dis-

covered, some two feet, some six or eight feet beneath marshy soil in the Moor, particularly at Taw Marsh in the north quarter. On exposure to the sun and air they grow almost as hard as Brazil wood. In the fens and moors of Lincolnshire oaks and fir trees in like manner, frequently present themselves beneath the soil, with their lower parts burnt, as if thrown down by fire—a fact mentioned by Dugdale, in his work on embanking. Remains of this description De Luc considers as produced on the Continent subsequent to its birth, and that peat moors were forests, which flourished for a time, but, not having a firm support in the peat, were overthrown by storms and buried by the continually increasing coats of that substance. Without being under the necessity of adopting his opinion, it is clear, from history, that wood, grow at present in spots which, formerly, could not boast of any, and vice versa ; and this may have been the case with Dartmoor, either from a deterioration of climate or some other cause. The writer has somewhere read that Dartmoor was divested of its forests by the Romans, in working iron mines ; but this would appear to be only a gratuitous assumption. That it was formerly wooded to a greater or less degree, is indirectly shewn by its being frequented by wolves, which animal has a constant predilection for large forests.

NOTE 21, Page 53.

— *The gaunt wolf and winged serpent held
Dominion o'er the vales.*

The day is long and happily past, when, in the merciless operation of the forest laws, the hills, vales, and tors, of Dartmoor, were a nursery for different ferocious beasts, in comparison with which the life of man was nothing worth. The universal tradition of the Moor is, that it was so infested ; and the names of some of the tors tend to preserve it fresh and unimpaired.

William of Malmsbury speaks of the wolf, (whence several places in Devon have received that prefix,) and the winged serpent ; and, though the latter may be fabulous, it is indisputable, that bears, wolves, foxes, boars, martens, badgers, otters, wild bulls and cows of a milk white colour, similar to those described by Boethius, in the Caledonian forest, and which were at one time common in Great Britain, abounded throughout this moorish district. Bishop Lyttleton has a charter, amongst his collection, of John, Earl of Mortaigne, afterwards King John, whereby leave was given to the clergy and laity of Devon, to take capreolum, the goat ; vulpam, the fox ; cattum, the marten or wild cat ; lupum, the wolf ; leporem, the hare ; lutram, the otter ; out of the bounds of the forests. The Rev. Mr. Polwhele, probably deriving

the idea from diluvian or fossil remains of moose deer having been found in Devon, although not on the Moor, mentions the segh or British mosse as one of its animals, but this is exceedingly doubtful. The same author incidently states, that in the parishes of Manaton, Kingsteinton, and Teigngrace, are many old tin works, which the inhabitants attribute to that period when wolves and winged serpents were no strangers to the hills or the valley; and he alludes to the same tradition in another place. In fact there is no ground for denying the former existence of wild beasts on Dartmoor. Under the forest laws they so multiplied everywhere as to become the curse of the people.

The marten once hunted, is still to be seen in Lidford woods, and the wolf was not extinct on Dartmoor, according to Howel, in the reign of Elizabeth. In Scotland, the last there was killed by Sir Ewan Cameron, as late as 1680. The goat no longer frequents it; but the fox does, and the hare and rabbit plentifully. Of the latter there are warrens on the borders. The red deer and stag have abandoned it, the former for the north of Devon. Sometimes, but rarely, one has been perceived near Ashburton. In the time of Henry III. the stag was common. The badger has its retreats in Widdicombe, Manaton, &c. The otter seems limited to the river Dart; its skin is valuable, having white hairs intermixed with brown. Besides those, the squirrel, dormouse, hedgehog, ermine or

stoat, viper, weasel, fitchet or fitch, bat, long-eared and horse-shoe snake, lizard, &c., frequent the district in greater or less abundance.

The moor horse, or rather pony, is indigenous and almost in a state of nature. The farmers who live on the enclosed estates breed their own horses. The late Captain Cotgrave, of the prison, had a great desire to possess a pony, and having seen one on Mr. Bray's property at Baredown, he went, with some assistants, to detach it from the herd. In attempting this they drove it upon some rocks by the side of a tor, and a man ascending on horseback to secure it, the active creature, to the infinite surprise of the captain who was below looking at the scene, leapt completely over the man and horse and escaped.

NOTE 22, Page 54.

The lonely wood of Wistman.

This solitary relic of Dartmoor forest stands on a slope near the West Dart, to the north-west of Crockern Tor, a mile or more above Two-Bridges, consisting of scrubbed decrepit trees, chiefly oak, which, by various causes, have been reduced to uncouth misshapen dwarfs. The granitic nature of the soil, if it can be so called, will not permit the stunted

roots either to spread or to entwine; and, of those which administer to the nourishment of the trees, some are scarcely below the soil, and others, totally exposed on the dry surface of the rocks, depend alone on the rain and air. None of these venerable foresters exceed seven feet in height; but their circumference is great in proportion, being nearly the same. Their boughs and branches are tangled with moss, thorns, brambles, and other parasites, the seeds of which, being conveyed thither by birds, have found a strange but convenient nidus. A solitude so cheerless and forbidding is seldom visited, except by the hare and fox. In spring and summer a little green may betray itself in foliage: but whoever has the melancholy satisfaction, at any time, of viewing it, must subscribe to the truth of Wordsworth's lines:—

“ I look'd upon the scene both far and near;
More doleful place did never eye survey,
It seem'd as if the spring time came not here,
Or nature here was willing to decay.”

Tradition relates that Wistman's, otherwise Welchman's Wood, was planted by the renowned Isabella de Fortibus, Countess of Devon.

NOTE 23, Page 57.

*The peasant boy
Untimely perish'd.*

By a ballad, which appeared lately in the New Monthly Magazine, entitled "The Babes on the Moor," two boys are said to have perished in a snow storm, but this is erroneous. Nearly three years since, two farming lads, belonging to Runnage in the east quarter of Dartmoor, were sent to look after sheep, but were overtaken by a heavy fall of snow, and benumbed with cold. Their absence being considered as of extraordinary duration, search was made for them, when both were found wrapped in a deep sleep. One of them by suitable means was recovered from his lethargy; the other had already sunk into the repose of death. The writer of this was once exposed to a similar storm. But for the guidance of a friend, intimately versed in these desolate wilds, where all marks of roads or foot-paths were hidden by the snow, he too, like Childe the hunter and the unfortunate boy, must have become a victim of the tempest. A storm on Dartmoor bears little resemblance to storms in general. It is awful, perilous, astounding, and pitiless, and woe to the stranger who, in a dark night and without a guide, is forced to encounter it!

NOTE 24, Page 58.

The luckless hunter.

From time immemorial a tradition has existed in the Moor, and is noticed by several authors, that John Childe, of Plymstock, a gentleman of large possessions, and a great hunter, whilst enjoying that amusement during an inclement season, was benighted, lost his way, and perished through cold, near Fox tor in the south quarter of the forest ; after taking the precaution to kill his horse, and, for the sake of warmth, to creep into its bowels, leaving a paper denoting that whoever should bury his body should have his lands at Plymstock.

“ The fyrste that fyndes and brings me to my grave,
The lands of Plymstoke they shal have.”

Childe having no issue had previously declared his intention to bestow his lands on the church wherein he might be buried, which, coming to the knowledge of the monks of Tavistock, they eagerly seized the body and were conveying it to that place ; but, learning, on the way, that some people of Plymstock were waiting at a ford to intercept the prey, they cunningly ordered a bridge to be built out of the usual track, thence pertinently called Guile Bridge, and succeeding in their object, became possessed of and enjoyed the lands until the dissolution, when the Russell family received a grant of them, and it still retains them.

In memory of Childe a tomb was erected to him in a plain a little below Fox Tor, which was standing about 15 years since, when Mr. Windeat, having received a new take or allotment, in which the tomb was included, *nearly destroyed it, by appropriating some of the stones for building and door steps.* It was composed of hewn granite, the under basement comprising four stones, 6 feet long by 12 inches square, and 8 stones more, growing shorter as the pile ascended, with an octagonal basement, above 3 feet high, and a cross fixed in it. The whole, when perfect, wore an antique and impressive appearance. A socket and groove for the cross, and the cross itself, with its shaft broken, are the only remains of the tomb, on which, Risdon says, there was an inscription, but no one recollects any traces of it.

Syward's Cross or Nun's Cross, another cross, forms a bound mark of the forest, and on its western side exhibits the inscription, in Saxon characters, *Bond bond*, meaning, as Mr. Shillibeer conjectures, the bond or bound of the land, but on reference to a perambulation in the 24th of Henry III., (1239) it appears that on one side of the stone there was then inscribed *Crux Siwardi*, and on the other *Roolande*. On the eastern side is the inscription in more modern characters, *SYWARD*, the signification of which has been disputed by many, but is considered by Mr. Shillibeer as the name of some prince, duke, or earl of the forest. In a charter of Isabella de Fortibus,

Countess of Albemarle and Devon, to Buckland Abbey, dated in 1291, reference is made to Syward's Cross or "Crucem Sywardi," its situation being described as "versus austrum per metas regardorum de Dertemore." In the same document occur Sma-lacumba Cross, Panebone Cross, Maynstone Cross, and Capris Cross.

NOTE 25, Page 59.

Romantic Widdicombe.

Widdicombe, anciently Wythicomb or Wydecomb, in the Moor, to distinguish it from Withycombe Raleigh, is an extensive parish, consisting of several narrow valleys, that wind amongst the roots of Dartmoor. The village itself lies in a vale several miles long; but in some places not more than half a mile broad and widening at the village, to which are annexed the two hamlets of Ponsworthy and Poundsgate. The Rev. J. H. Mason is the vicar, under whose hospitable roof the stranger and the friend alike experience a ready welcome at all seasons. The church tower is particularly beautiful. Some centuries ago, Widdicombe belonged to Dartmoor, and for that reason it is called Widdicombe in the Moor, as from the same cause, Buckland on the Moor is so styled to distinguish it from other Bucklands, but

both have been long dissevered therefrom as pur-lieus, and no part of either now pertains to the Moor, contrary, with respect to Widdicombe, to the assertion of Mr. Polwhele. Widdicombe abounds in copper, and can boast of being the birth-place of Richard Armachanus, Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of Ireland, a learned man and a great writer.

In the Harleian Miscellany, iii. 211., there is an account of a most lamentable accident by lightning at "Withycombe in the Dartmoors, on Sunday, 21st October, 1638," (14th of Charles I.) of which Hearne, at the end of Adam de Domerham, 1727, page 676, inserts a poetical description; written by Richard Hill, schoolmaster, a part of it being inscribed on two tables in the church. The Rev. George Lyde, the vicar, who was in his pulpit when it happened, wrote another poetical description of the parish and accident. During the storm a ball of fire fell into the church amongst the congregation, killing four persons, wounding sixty two, oversetting all the pews, and inflicting other damage to the amount of £300. On the same day and about the same time, hail stones of extraordinary size, some of them weighing seven ounces, descended from the atmosphere near Plymouth. A circumstantial account of it appears in the same volume of the Miscellany. Spencer, in his English Traveller, mentions a similar occurrence at Widdicombe, in 1662, but this rests solely on his authority. In 1689, the church at Cruwys Morchard, and

in 1779, December 13th, the church at Manaton were subjected to a like visitation. At Moreton, well designated by Mr. Polwhele as the land of thunder, and at Shaugh, only two or three years since, the churches have been injured in the same way.

From the first existence of poor rates, until a law suit in 1815, all the east quarter of the Moor paid their rates at Widdicombe.

NOTE 26, Page 63.

Sweet Dart.

This noble river deserves the honour of imparting its name to the Moor. It has two heads, one in the morass surrounding Cranmere Pool, distinguished by a granite pillar 12 feet high, probably erected to mark this source, the other two or three miles distant, which unite under the several appellations of the East and West Dart in a valley at Dartmeet, a charming spot, where also the three parishes of Lydford, Widdicombe, and Hole form a junction. Here, until lately, existed the dilapidated remains of a very ancient bridge composed of large flat stones supported by upright ones, with intervals for the passage of the current, but evidently, from its rude, primitive, and uncemented appearance, constructed before the know-

ledge of regular arches. These interesting relics were, a few years since, swept away by a moorland inundation. Immediately below is another bridge of modern construction with two arches, on one side of which lies Brimps, consisting of a house, well cultivated farm, and thriving wood, belonging to R. R. Sanders, esq.; and on the other a lofty heath with a serpentine road descending it and leading by the last mentioned bridge over the river. At Dartmeet the two heads lose their characteristics of east and west, and flow together simply as the Dart, receiving, in their progress, many tributary streams, especially the Webber, which render the whole a comparatively deep and majestic river. On reaching Holne it enters on the inclosed lands, and its banks begin to be clothed with woods and continue to be so adorned until its arrival at Totnes and thence to Dartmouth, where, after pursuing a career, now impetuous, now gentle, and partaking of a diversity of scenery from the sublimely wild to the soft and beautiful, it expands into a safe and capacious harbour at the northern part of Start Bay. Some part of its course traverses limestone strata resting on schistus, with occasional displays of dunstone. Two miles below Dartmeet there is a cascade, which is but little known.

NOTE 27, Page 63.

The urn of Cranmere.

Cranmere or Craumere Pool, one of the principal curiosities of Dartmoor, lies in its northern quarter, in a direct line between Okehampton and Crockern Tor, on the top of a high hill never known to be dry, and consisting of morass or red bog and rushes, which, in process of time, have so accumulated as to rise 40 or 50 feet above the natural level. It is of an oblong form, about 150 feet in length by 80 broad, the water appearing to issue from a bed of gravel beneath the peat, which is here peculiarly excellent and abundant, although, from its remoteness, but little used. The precise site is difficult to be found, even by those who have before visited it, and it cannot be approached without precaution, by man or horse, except in summer, when the ground for a narrow space is more solid than the rest. In the vicinity of the pool are quaking bogs.

Some of the Moor rivers are thought to have their immediate sources in the pool, but this is not precisely the fact. One only, and that the West Ockment, is so circumstanced. The others flow, in opposite directions, from the surrounding morass: but as the water with which it is saturated is the produce of the pool itself, these particular rivers may be indirectly said to originate there.

De Luc observes, that Cranmere means the place of cranes, and it is possible, that at one time those birds resorted to it. Wild ducks now make it their haunt in the winter season. In Provence there is a place of the same name and nearly of the same kind as Cranmere.

NOTE 28, Page 64.

————— *From his copious fount
Swift rolls thy Teign.*

This river rises from the hills above Gidleigh, and, in point of magnitude, is but little inferior to the Dart; and perhaps, from its circuitous route, its course is longer. From it the hundred of Teignbridge, the villages of Bishopsteignton, Kingsteignton, Teigngrace, Drewsteignton, Canonteign, and last, though not least, the town of Teignmouth, derive their names.

The banks of the Teign are often visited, on account of the antiquities at Drewsteignton and its scenery, particularly at Fingle bridge, where the river flows through a narrow pass between two mountainous ridges on each side. Whiddon Park, on one bank, forms a beautiful contrast to the ruder features of the other. On the adjacent hills are Wooston, Cranbrook,

and Prestonbury entrenchments, which, the writer ascribes to the Romans, of which people there was certainly a bridge over the Teign, beneath the present bridge of the same name.

The cromlech is at a farm called Shilston, a mile and a quarter west of Drewsteignton, and two miles north of Chagford. Its quoit or covering stone has, as usual, three supporters of unequal heights, and is $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 10 wide, with an average thickness of 1 foot 9 inches, but at one part 3 feet by 7 inches, having its angles or edges almost exact to the cardinal points, and its upper surface at one place $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet, at the others 8 feet from the ground, which admits the passage beneath it of a tall man with his hat on. The under part is injured by fire and the cavity used for keeping wood and furze. The whole has rather a leaning appearance, and somewhat resembles a large irregular trapezium in shape. The gross weight is estimated at 16 tons. It bears the appellation of Spinsters' Rock, from a tradition that three spinsters or unmarried women erected it one morning, before breakfast, for their amusement ! ! !

The logan is seated in the channel of the Teign, being poised on another stone, deeply engrafted in a mass of granite rocks, and unequally sided, at some parts 6, at others 7, and at the western end 10 feet in height, from east to west about 18 feet in length, and, what is remarkable, of the same size as the quoit of

the cromlech, though differently shaped. Its oscillating power has almost ceased. The surrounding country is exceedingly grand, the south side of the river being here bounded by some steep hills, from which heavy fragments are continually falling into the stream, penning it up narrower and rendering its course more violent and noisy. At Holy Street, near Chagford, on the same river, was another logan, of less dimensions, which no longer vibrates.

Chappell considers the Drewsteignton cromlech as a druidical place of judicature, or intended for astronomical purposes. Mr. Polwhele thinks it druidical. At Stanton Drew near Bristol is a druidical circle, and the similarity of the two names, Stanton Drew and Drewsteignton, might, *prima facie*, induce the supposition that both these monuments are druidical.

NOTE 29, Page 67.

Holne Chace.

This is a tract of land, extending by the name of Holne Chace, and Holne Moor, two miles or more along the Dart, near Ashburton, the upper part rocky and the lower fringed with woods, and, in swampy spots, abounding with the *myrica gale* or Devonshire myrtle.

“*Illum etiam fuere myricæ.*”—*Virgil's Eclogues.*

At the entrance of the Chace there is a walk nearly a mile in length, enclosed on each side with large bushes of holly. Beyond is Holne Park, which, with the manor, chace, and Moor, belongs to Sir Bouchier Wrey, bart. Behind it, on an eminence, lies Hem-bury Castle, conjectured to be a Danish earth-work. On the chace crystallized or rhombic felspar is found. It was one of the purlieus of Dartmoor forest, and part of the barony of Barnstaple, when included in the duchy lands, and is frequently visited by strangers, as a spot where nature has concentrated together, in a manner which man would in vain attempt to imitate, a luxuriant variety of scenic beauties.

Near it is another Chace, called Holly Chace, the property of E. P. Bastard, esq., one of the members for Devon, and still nearer, Spitchwich, belonging to the late Lord Ashburton, tenanted by Dr. Leach; the lord of which manor, as well as of Ilsington, and the Abbot of Buckfastleigh, had the power of inflicting capital punishment on their vassals—a power happily superseded by the transfer of justice to better hands.

At Buckland on the Moor is a mansion occupied by the widow of the late T. P. Bastard, esq., who for 37 years faithfully and independently represented Devon in seven successive parliaments.

Ashburton, anciently Asperton, from its vicinity to Holne Chace, and being the place whence so many set out to visit the latter, may justly claim some little notice. In Domesday Book it stands as *terra regis*. In the 26th of Edward I. it was made one of the four Devonshire stannary towns being the same year in which Chagford received the like privilege. In the same year it returned members to parliament. In the 3rd of Edward II. Bishop Stapylton obtained for it a weekly market and a yearly fair. In the 8th of Henry IV. it again sent members to parliament, but not any more until 1640. When James I. created his son, the unfortunate Charles, Duke of Cornwall, he gave him the manor and lands of Ashburton, which is a proof that they, at that time, were in the crown. By a grant of Charles II. the same passed to strangers and Lord Clinton is now the owner. In 1712 Andrew Quicke, esq., one of the borough members, procured it two other fairs. Ashburton has been distinguished for its woollen and yarn manufactures.

NOTE 30, Page 67.

The Tavy, mountain-born.

The Tavy ranks next to the Dart and Teign ; but, excepting at its upper part, its course is not so impetuous nor so rocky, as of those and the other moor

rivers. Its banks are richly decorated with wood and coppice at various parts, and here and there are towering cliffs, which invest the scenery with much grandeur.

The hundred and town of Tavistock, and the villages of Peter Tavy and Mary Tavy are thence denominated. The former sent members to parliament three times in the reign of Edward I. and II., and has done so ever since the beginning of the reign of Edward III. William of Malmsbury describes it as "pleasant for the convenience of wood, fine fishing, and an uniform church"—encomiums, which, save the fine fishing, it deserves.

Sir John Glanville, a Justice of the Common Pleas, Serjeant Glanville, his son, John Fitz, an eminent lawyer, Sir John Maynard one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal of England, and William Brown, author, about 1600, of some excellent poems, intitled *Britannia's Pastorals*, and containing many lines descriptive of the place, were born there.

At Crowndale, near it, (of which F. C. Lewis, in his *Delineations of Devonshire rivers*, gives a view,) not at Plymouth, as erroneously conceived, was born Sir Francis Drake.

The principal glory of Tavistock has been its Benedictine Monastery, dedicated to St. Mary and St.

Rumon, founded by Ordgar, Earl of Devon, in 961, and completed by Ordolph his son, whose sister Elfrida, by the murder of her husband Ethelwold, whilst hunting, became the queen of Edgar. Ethelred, in 981, endowed the abbey with divers lands and liberties, but it was burnt by the Danes 30 years after the foundation, and restored with additional immunities. Henry I. granted it a market, fair of three days' continuance, view of frank pledge, gallows, pillory, assize of bread and beer, &c., with "the jurisdiction and the whole hundred of Tavistock;" and Levingus, successively Bishop of Crediton, Cornwall, and Worcester, was a generous benefactor, all which Edward the Confessor confirmed; pope Celestine adding other privileges and exemptions. According to Leland the abbey church was 126 yards or paces (378 feet) in length, besides a chapel to the Virgin at the end of it, cloisters of the same spacious extent, and a magnificent chapter house containing 36 arched stalls. At one time the abbey had 15 knights' fees, or 10,200 acres of land, at 680 acres to each fee. Its abbots were rich, proud, and aspiring, being appointed by the popes, and early claimed to be barons of parliament, but it does not appear that they then succeeded.

The abbey was transferred by patent, dated July 4th, 1529, to John Lord Russell (afterwards created Earl of Bedford) with the borough, town, burgage, rectory, and vicarage of Tavistock, which noble family

still possesses it, having been advanced by William III. to the farther honours of Duke of Bedford and Marquis of Tavistock. At the suppression, a chapel was erected within the abbey inclosure, and licenced for divine worship, March 10th, 1541-2, at the instance of Lady Dorothy Mountjoy. In 1670, the abbey was taken down, and some detached fragments are all that now remain of this majestic edifice. Many individuals of note have been there buried; amongst others, St. Rumon, Edmund, brother of Edmund Ironside, Ordgar, Bishop Levingus, in 1046, who preferred being inhumed there to Worcester, and Ordulph, whose figure was to be seen in a dilapidated cloister, in 1718, and who is reported to have been of such a colossal size as to be capable of breaking the strongest gate bars, and striding over rivers ten feet wide! A fractured tomb, supposed to be of this personage, was amongst the ruins, with an inscription near it on a fragment:—

“ Sub jacet intus,
Conditor.”

But it does not follow that the two belonged to each other, or that either marked the place of the original founder's interment. Not far distant was a sarcophagus, and in it bones of large dimensions, two of which are kept in the church, and which tradition refers to Ordulph. They do not, however, correspond with William of Malmsbury's account, as to size, although the size mentioned by that author is

neither extraordinary nor unparalleled, the height of Ordulph not exceeding 8 feet. O'Brien, the Irish giant, was more, and many other instances of the like or a greater height might be adduced, both in ancient and modern times. Carew, in his History of Cornwall, notices the finding of some gigantic bones in the chancel of St. Stephen's church, near Saltash, which were considered as those of Ordgar, the father of Ordulph, but there was more reason to suppose that they belonged to Cadoc duke or earl of Cornwall.

An upright sepulchral stone stood at the head of the sarcophagus, inscribed :—

Nepos Ramii filii condevi,

which has been removed to the vicar's garden ; but a gentleman of Tavistock, with whom the writer has communicated on the subject, doubts if it has any connection with the abbey, there being three or four, if not five stones of the same kind on and near Dartmoor.

The abbey was farther distinguished for its encouragement of Saxon literature, on which lectures were read at Tavistock, down to the reign of Charles I., and its printing press, established there soon after Caxton's introduction of that art into England. Thence issued "The confirmation of the tynners' charter, 26th Henry VIII.," 16 leaves 4to., the earl of Bedford being then Lord Warden ; some others printed in the wardenship of Sir Walter Raleigh ; Wal-

ton's translation of Boetius de Consolatione, 4to., "emprinted in the monastery of Tavestoke in Den-shyre, by me Dan Thomas Rychard, monke of the said monastery, 1525;" and a Saxon Grammar, called the Long Grammar. The Rev. Mr. Oliver, in his Historical Collections relating to monasteries in Devon, has a list of the abbots of Tavistock to its suppression. Tavistock is one of the stannary towns, and the courts are usually held there.

At Tavistock was preserved the charter of John, "De Libertatibus Comitatus Devon," whence Bishop Stapylton made the copy inserted in his collection.

Upon the estuary of the Tavy are situated Warleigh, the seat of the Rev. Walter Radcliffe, whose ancestors became possessed of it in the seventeenth century, by a purchase from a family that had resided there from the reign of Stephen; and Maristow, the late seat of Sir Massch Lopes, bart., M.P., who bought it of the Heywoods. In the royal visit to Plymouth, and its neighbourhood, in 1789, when it belonged to the Heywoods, the king and queen were so delighted with the spot, as to visit it on two consecutive days.

NOTE 31, Page 69.

The Walkham.

This river rises in the west quarter of Dartmoor, and falls into the Tavy a mile from Greenofen bridge, after leaving its name with the parish of Walkhampton, which, from its contiguity to the Moor, was, at some period or other, in all likelihood, one of its purlieus.

The Commons or wastes of Walkhampton are very extensive, being upwards of 10,000 acres, and were the subject of dispute between the Duchy of Cornwall and Sir Masseh Lopes, bart., but, after law proceedings had commenced, the claim of the former was abandoned in March, 1810, and subsequently the right of the latter was confirmed by his obtaining a verdict of £500 on a writ of enquiry against Mr. Isbell for taking stone therefrom to build Dartmoor prison, without procuring Sir Masseh's leave. In 1820 Sir Masseh granted a lease of the granite thereon to the Plymouth and Dartmoor Railway Company for a long term of years, which the company has assigned to Messrs. Johnsons and Brice, who are working quarries at King tor, and bringing this handsome and durable material into rapid and extensive circulation.

In these commons there are two curiosities, both well deserving of attention. The first is a pool of

water, about two miles south south west of the prison, called Clacywell Pool, from an estate adjoining. The depth has been tried with the bell ropes of Walkhampton church, which are between 80 and 90 fathoms long, and also by truss ropes, which, before carts came into use, were employed in this part of the country for fastening hay, &c., on pack horses, but without finding bottom. Great numbers of fish have been placed in it at different times but never seen afterwards. The pool appears to be subject to periodical falls and rises. On the 22nd of April, 1824, at half past three in the afternoon, it was higher by $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet than at the earlier part of the same day, and it was 12 feet higher than that in April, 1823. There is a constant burst of water from the side of the hill below it. The soil around is partly gravel and partly clay, affording traces either that it was the crater of an extinct volcano, or the shaft of an ancient mine. The circumference of the pool, at the edge of the water, is 305 yards, the perpendicular height of the bank on the back and two sides 35 feet, and in the front about 6 feet, where it sometimes overflows.

The other curiosity is a stone causeway or mound leading from the Burrows, between Leather tor and Sharpitor, on the same commons, over Leedon hill and the forest as far as Chagford. By some it has been accounted a direction for travellers, and by others as a boundary.

NOTE 32, Page 69.

The deathless name of Elliott.

The noble individual alluded to is the glorious defender of Gibraltar. His being interred here may be explained by his having married a sister of Sir F. H. Drake, to whom belonged Buckland Abbey.

Buckland Abbey is now one of the seats of Sir T. F. E. Drake, bart. In 1278 it was founded and dedicated to St. Mary and St. Benedict, by Amicia, countess of Baldwin de Rivers, earl of Devon; and Isabella de Fortibus, her daughter, gave other lands and greater privileges, all which were confirmed by Edward II. in the 4th year of his reign. In 1287 a colony of Cistercian monks was transferred thither from Quarrer, in the Isle of Wight, who, having presumed to exercise their functions without the licence of Walter Bronescombe, Bishop of Exeter, were excommunicated and suspended, but soon restored, at the intercession of Queen Eleanor. Its revenues at the dissolution were £241 17s. 9¼d. The Abbey and domain were purchased by Sir Francis Drake in the time of Elizabeth, and he and his descendants resided there. A square massive tower, a turret in the court yard, and some other trifling vestiges are the only remains of the old structure, it having undergone repairs and alterations at various times, to fit it as a family residence.

NOTE 33, Page 72.

Sheepstor's dark-brow'd rock.

This tor is both grand in feature and stupendous in dimensions, its base covering a space of more than one hundred acres, which, according to an ancient prophecy, is very rich in minerals of various kinds, and has been found, on experiments, to contain cobalt, iron, china clay, manganese, silver, lead, and copper. Prills of gold have been found in the river and other streams below, and enough of that valuable substance was discovered, a few years since, by one person (Wellington, a miner,) as to sell in Plymouth for about £40. At the middle of the tor is a remarkable cavern, with seats, ostensibly the work of art, and containing a spring of the purest water. The common people conceive it to be the palace of the pixies or Devonshire fairies, and seldom visit it without leaving some offerings of moss or eatables. Tradition speaks of it as having been the retreat of one of the Elford family, during the civil wars in Cromwell's time, who, being a painter, and to beguile the irksomeness of confinement, embellished its sides with pictures. Subsequently, if report may be credited, less worthy, but more substantial personages, namely, gipsies and smugglers, have haunted it.

The manor of Sheepstor, which belongs to H. M. Baylay, esq., enjoys great privileges, and extends over

several estates in different parishes, and was formerly bound to keep a turret of Plympton castle in repair. It is ten miles in circumference, and amongst other game, harbours woodcocks in abundance and of large size, and heath fowl; snipes breed, and are found there all the year. The owners of estates in the parish of Sheepstor, are invested, on the payment of a small annual acknowledgment, with the rights of venville in the forest of Dartmoor, consisting of the unrestricted usages of fuel and pasturage, which are said, according to a tradition generally believed by the inhabitants of the parish, to have been granted them by one of the earliest Henries, (perhaps Henry III., who in 1264 was at war with his barons, when Devon and Cornwall were strongly in his favour) for having materially assisted him by their loyal attachment in some rebellion; but it is more probable that they derived those rights from the circumstance of the parish having possibly belonged to the forest and being dismembered therefrom as a purlien, with the rights still attached. It is certain, however, that the right of venville is not general to the estates bordering on the forest, and as a proof of this, in the parish of Walkhampton, though a greater part of Dartmoor, and formerly belonging to it, no more than one or two estates enjoy the privilege.

By a record dated 1626, it appears that the "antient privileges and freedom of the mannor of Sheepstor were ever heretofore used and accustomed, and

then were, that all such persons as did or should thereafter inhabit and dwell within the said hamlett, were free from payment of all fifteens, which are commonly called fifth dole, and from payment of Sherif silver, and from any appearance at the Court called the Sherriffs' Turn, and from the office of tything man, and all manner of limbs belonging to the same, and from watching and warding of all beacons, or any other where, save only within the same hamlett."

Beneath the tor lies the secluded village or hamlet of the same name, with its fine cascade, formed by the waters of a large brook falling, with deafening roar, above 150 feet over huge fragments of granite, in broken gushings from crag to crag, and then stealing away through thick underwood invisibly, its course being now and then betrayed by its white mantling through the leafage.

NOTE 34, Page 72.

Meavy's venerable oak.

The river Mew or Meavy, after leaving Dartmoor, is augmented by two streams, one flowing from that part of the Moor where Siward's Cross formerly stood, and the other from Englisburrow, not far from

Meavy church, where, with its tributaries, it first assumes the name of Plym, of which Donn's map makes it a principal branch, though omitting its name and taking no notice of the stream from Siward's Cross; from all which it would appear that there is no such river as the Plym, *per se*, independently of other rivers, as might be conjectured from the fact of a head in the Moor being called Plym head, unless, as supposed by Mr. Shillibeer, the Cad be another name for that river.

Honoured, nevertheless, as the Plym is by the merger of other names into its own, the Meavy is not the less worthy of notice on that account. Its placid vale, and its august oak must at all times command admiration from the lovers of nature.

From Roborough Down, or, perhaps, with more advantage from a hill near Sheepstor, a delicious variety of objects presents itself. A clear stream winding through fertile pastures of emeraldine hue—a rural village and white spire—umbrageous and rocky slopes—nestling cottages, emitting long spiral columns of smoke into the clear horizon—Maker tower, and the wood-crowned heights of Mount Edgcumbe—the sterile precincts of Dartmoor, and its torsi frowning aloof in sullen majesty—the retiring outline of the Cornish mountains—all nicely blended, yet admirably contrasted, conspire to produce the beautiful, the picturesque, and the sublime.

“Meavy oak, although it has suffered from the touch of ‘decay’s effacing fingers,’ continues venerably magnificent. It is of an extraordinary circumference, and is completely hollowed out by the slow but never failing operations of centuries. Indeed little is left but the bark. The cavity, as affirmed by the hostess of the Royal Oak, a little inn standing near the tree, once accommodated nine persons at a dinner party; it is now used as a turf house. The lower branches still obey the voice of spring and spread their living canopy over a large area of ground. The topmost branches, however, are bald, having long ceased to be adorned with the rich foliage which they bore in the days of their young lustihood. Over them the all-conquering hand of time has achieved a perfect victory. They impress their rifted outline against the deep blue of the heavens, black and cheerlessly, and in some places where the outer part of the wood has dropped away, the core of the tree discloses itself in ghastly whiteness. When the withered top is beheld against the bright back-ground of a serene evening sky, it has an unusually melancholy aspect, which is rendered the more striking from being contrasted with the vegetation yet lingering on the lower branches.”

Hoo Meavy, the property of Henry Mervyn Baylay, esq., was the occasional residence of the Drake family previously to its receiving the grant of Buckland Abbey, in the sixteenth century, and is a manor

subject to the manor of Sheepstor, formerly in the same family, from whom, together with Sheepstor, it passed to one of the Elfordes, by intermarriage with the heiress of the celebrated Sir Francis Drake, and afterwards to the Northmores. Hoo Meavy is situated about the middle of Meavy Vale, on the left bank of the river Meavy, and the house, though modernized, retains some traces of its old appearance, in its gothic doorways and stone window frames.

NOTE 35, Page 72.

The ever-brawling Cad.

This, and the following note, as well as the description of the oak at Meavy, are by the writer of the preface.

The Cad rises on Dartmoor, and, after flowing for some distance through a wild and dreary tract of moorland, enters what is generally termed "The Valley of the Cad," just below Cadaford Bridge. On arriving in that secluded glen, the river assumes the most impetuous and romantic character imaginable, dashing over the rocks, so profusely strewn in its channel, with headlong rapidity. Indeed, the stream from its first entrance into this vale, till it unites its waters with those of the Plym, at Shaugh Bridge, presents

one continuous scene of tumult, and is ever struggling with the masses of granite which seem to have been hurled into its bed by some gigantic power from the cliffs above. These rocks are generally of an enormous size, and are thrown together in the wildest and most grotesque manner. Frequently may a huge fragment be seen spanning the stream and forming a kind of rude bridge, while at another spot the river is obliged to leap over a perpendicular barrier of rock which seems resolved to dispute the further passage of the waters. In some places the torrent falls over an assemblage of disjointed masses, and leaps from crag to crag in distinct and picturesque sheets of feathery foam. In other parts little islets are formed in the middle of the stream, with willows and other trees growing on them. These, steadily bending over the ever-flashing waters, give an air of wild serenity to the spot; while their dark foliage is beautifully contrasted with the snowy whiteness of the foam beneath.

The traveller will behold the valley of the Cad to the greatest advantage, by descending the left bank of the river from Cadaford Bridge. To one who has not been accustomed to the wilder features of Nature the first aspect of this valley presents a most striking effect. The right bank rises to a dizzy height covered with a beautiful profusion of young trees. It is opposed, however on the other side by a slope of very different appearance. All there is dreary yet magni-

ficent barrenness, without a bough to shade it, and, at first sight, without a vegetable beauty to recommend it. Huge fragments of granite lie scattered about in the wildest confusion. Some masses appear as if they had just been torn out of the bowels of the Moor by some unearthly power; others are on tiptoe to quit their precarious situations and roll down into the flashing torrent. Even this spot, however, will be found to possess its attractions. It is blessed with many a lovely flowret which blooms there to redeem the savage character of the scene: the sweet-smelling erica with its purple bells—the furze with its guarded golden baskets, “treasuries of the fays and fairies,” and even that tenderest daughter of Spring, the pensive violet, hallows by its presence many a craggy nook. Beds of velvet turf may here and there be seen studded with daisies, looking like silver stars set in a firmament of green. The rude rocks are in themselves objects of interest; they are clad with many a delicious specimen of lichen, and the hues of their various mosses are as bright as the visions of fancy. Young ivies creep up the sides of the rude fragments, and not unfrequently near the river’s marge does the graceful woodbine uplift its blushing coronals in the sunny air.

NOTE 36, Page 72.

The crest of Dewerstone.

The most remarkable cliff in the valley of the Cad is the Dewerstone. This huge mass of rock rises perpendicularly from the margin of the stream to an immense height. Its whole surface is jagged and seamed in the manner so peculiar to granite, which makes the beholder imagine that the stones are regularly piled on each other. It is profusely overgrown with ivy and other creeping plants, which spread their pleasant foliage over its shattered front, as if anxious to bind up the wounds that time and tempest have inflicted. To add to the striking effect of its appearance, numerous hawks, ravens, &c., may be seen floating around its rugged crest and filling the air with their hoarse screamings. He who has sufficient nerve to gaze from the summit of the Dewerstone into the frightful depth beneath, will be amply remunerated for the trouble which may be experienced in ascending. The rocks immediately beneath the view seem as if they had been struck at once by a thousand thunderbolts, and appear only prevented from bursting asunder by chains of ivy. A few wild flowers are sprinkled about in the crevices of the cliff,—tufts of broom wave like golden banners in the passing breeze, and these, with here and there a mountain ash clinging half way down the precipice, impart a wild animation to the spot.

NOTE 37, Page 74.

The rifted bank of Lyd.

This river arises on the Moor, and flowing near imparts its name to the ancient town of Lydford, and the hundred and village of Lydstone, Lydston, or Lifton, falling at the end of its career into the Tamar.

Lydford, in Saxon and other times, denominated Hlidaford, Lideforde or Lidefort, Lyghatford, and in Exon Domesday Lideforda, is now only a decayed village, consisting of ragged cottages, cold, treeless, and unprotected, situated seven miles from Tavistock and eight from Okehampton, and it has been for a long time in that condition. But it was formerly a place of much importance. Julius Cæsar is said by Bruce to have honoured it with a visit soon after his invasion of Britain. In the days of Edward the Confessor it was the king's demesne or terra regis, and the manor extended, as it still does, over the whole forest of Dartmoor; Manerium de Lideford extendit per totam forrestem de Dartmore. To the same effect testifies Sir William Pole in his Collections: "Lidforth hath always belonged unto the aerls and dukes of Cornwall, and yo the principal towne of the stannery, and there is containyd within the precincts of the parish the whole or most part of Dartmore." Page 345. Ethelred II., whose number of mints far exceeded that of any preceding monarch, had one at Lydford,

the coins of which are distinguishable by the letters LVD. LVDA. LVDAN. In the Anglo Saxon era the minting towns in Devon were Lydford, Totnes, Barnstaple and Teignmouth. Those of Lydford and Totnes were not of long duration, and chiefly in the reign of Ethelred II. The Lydford coins are rare, but two or three of them were in Dr. Hunter's cabinet. In the 19th of this king (977) the Danes made their way to Lydford, after destroying Tavistock Abbey.

Lydford was anciently fortified, walled and moated, with three gates, which still retain the names of north gate, south gate, and east gate, and the sites of which were visible, with the foundations of walls, in Risdon's time. The keep of the castle, 50 feet square by 40 high, placed on an artificial mound, only remains, containing, on the west side, a door with a few scattered windows in the walls, and having a steep descent to the Lyd, and some mounds of earth near, towards the west. The custody of the castle was always confided to a man of high quality. In 1238 the manor and castle of Lydford, with Dartmoor chace, were granted by Henry III. to his brother Richard. In 1307 Edward II. conferred the same on his favourite, Piers de Gaveston. In 1338 Richard Abberbury was made keeper of the castle and forest; and in 1404 Henry IV. revoked a previous grant of them to Peter de Courtenay, because they had been reunited to the duchy, "*eo quod unit fuerunt ducatum Cornubiæ.*"

The dungeon of the castle was so bad as to give rise to the saying: "Lydford law punishes a criminal first and tries him afterwards;" which saying Fuller charitably attributes to some tinnors "justly obnoxious to censure and deservedly punished," not to the faults of the law itself; but a competent witness, Browne, the poet of Tavistock, bears testimony to the fact:—

" I've often heard of Lydford law
How in the morn they hang and draw,
And sit in judgment after,
At first I wondered at it much ;
But since I've found the matter such
That it deserves no laughter."

It is a dark deep place filled with rubbish, in which offenders were detained for a month, year, or longer, there being a gaol delivery only once in ten years; which circumstance was complained of in a petition to Edward III., when a commission issued to redress it. In 1512 Richard or William Strode, esq., one of the Strodes of Newnham, and member for the borough of Plymton Earle, for his exertions in procuring an act to prevent blocking up harbours with stream works, was prosecuted, or rather persecuted, by the tinnors in their court, then holden at Crockern Tor, and heavily fined. On his refusal to pay the same, he was confined in this most horrible and loathsome dungeon, and kept in irons on bread and water only for more than three weeks. But the result of this tyrannous act was a considerable improvement effect-

ed by parliament in some of the most important stannary privileges.

Lydford, however uninteresting and repulsive in itself as a village, possesses in its vicinity many natural beauties. Gilpin says they would be "no disgrace to the wildest and most picturesque country," and De Lauc that the district around it exhibits on a small scale various phenomena similar to the catastrophes of strata in the Alps. On approaching the place from Tavistock a bridge is perceived of one arch, about 30 feet long by 10 wide, flung over a chasm worn by the river Lyd or caused by an earthquake, very narrow and awful to look upon, the sides projecting in many places towards each other, whence trees shooting out contribute to augment the gloom, whilst the current beneath lies so deep as not to be seen, but merely heard in indistinct murmurs, excepting when agitated by floods. The bridge, viewed from below, resembles an aerial one.

Not far from this spot is what is commonly, but erroneously, called Lyd fall, which is occasioned, not by the river, but by the collection of several rivulets above into an excavated space for the use of a mill, whose waters united into a single stream form the fall, and which are sometimes ponded back to produce a greater effect on the eye of strangers. The rock over which the waters glide is composed of smooth schistose strata, and some way down is a projection,

which causes as it were a second fall. At the bottom, to which there is a winding path through a wood, is a caldron or pit hollowed by their constant attrition. The height of the fall, or rather two falls, may be estimated at 110 feet. The Lyd, emerging into day from the chasm, joins the falling waters, and both flow together in a more peaceable course adown the valley, the sides of which are roughened with woods and copses. "The depth of the valley, and the gloom diffused by the thick woods, give a solemnity to the scene which would amply repay the traveller who may be fond of picturesque scenery, even if there were no waterfall to increase the beauty or to add to the other natural attractions of the place. The Lyd likewise forces its silvery stream through the wood, and gives additional beauty to this interesting spot." *Jones's MS. Tour of Devonshire.*

On the Lyd is another fall, called Kit or Skid fall, on a common a mile and half from the castle. The river here bursts through steep and craggy rocks with a descent of 30 feet, at one place losing itself beneath the stones. If surrounded by trees it would be more attractive than it is, but still it highly deserves a visit. Fragments of tin ore are found in the channel of the Lyd.

NOTE 38, Page 76.

—————*The solitary bird, that makes
The rock his sole companion.*

The Bird alluded to in the text is the Ring Ouzel, (*Turdus Torquatus*) which according to Pennant, “builds among craggy rocks in high and mountainous places, which it chiefly inhabits, flying, when disturbed, from the top of one rock to another, and seldom perching on trees. I have seen it but three or four times, and always on Dartmoor.”

In page 92 of the text, mention is made of another Ouzel :

—————“The cheerful bird that loves the stream,
And the stream’s voice, and answers in like strains,
Murmuring deliciously.”

This is the Water Ouzel, (*Turdus Cinctus*) which is always seen accompanied by its mate only, and never leaves the banks of rivers. Its song is really beautiful and has a great resemblance to the sound of water gurgling among pebbles.

With the former, (*Turdus Torquatus*) from its having a white crest, has been connected the tradition respecting the appearance of a white bird before the death of any of the family of Oxenham, in South Tawton, of which Howell speaks in his *Familiar Letters*, page 232. “Being in a Lapidary’s shop, in

Fleet-Street, (July 3. 1632) I observed a marble, inscribed:—"Here lies John Oxenham, a goodly young man, in whose chamber, as he was struggling with the pangs of death, a bird with a white crest was seen fluttering about his bed, and so vanished.

"Here lies also Mary Oxenham, the sister of the said John, who died the next day, and the same apparition was seen in the room.

"Here lies, hard by, James Oxenham, the son of the said John, who died a child in his cradle a little after, and such a bird was seen fluttering about his head a little before he expired, which vanished afterwards,

"Here lies Elizabeth Oxenham, the mother of the said John, who died sixteen years since, when such a bird, with a white crest, was seen about the bed before her death."

"To all these," he adds, "there be divers witnesses, both squires and ladies, whose names are engraven upon the stone; this stone is to be sent to a town hard by Exeter, where this happened." The monument herein described was intended, it is believed, for the parish church of Zele Monachorum, but is not now to be found in any of our Devonshire churches.

The accidental appearance of this bird at Oxenham, attracted thither by the light in the sick chamber, or by some other cause, may have given rise to the tradition, and the more particularly as the Moor is close to South Tawton, and the Ring Ouzel frequents that part of it. There is no other rational mode of accounting for such a singular circumstance. This happening in one instance was extended, by superstition, to other cases of death in the same family.

NOTE 39, Page 73.

The rapid Erme.

The river Erme or Arme rises in the south quarter of the Moor, and gives name to the hundred and parish of Ermington and Ermmouth. Its source, by barometer, is 1,131 feet above the sea, and consequently its current is rapid. The Rev. Mr. Polwhele thinks that it is called Arme from a colony of Armenians settling on its banks, and there founding Armenton or Ermington, which idea Vallancy favours, denominating the Arme, from that circumstance, the Armine; but Baxter, in his Glossary, considers Ermington as a very ancient British town; and the late Mr Dyer, of Exeter, derived Arme from Aun or Aum, water, changed to Arme. Its banks are abundantly clothed with wood and coppice, both above

and below Ivy Bridge, through which it flows, amid large blocks of granite, with which the neighbouring hills, though principally consisting of schistus and dun-stone, are covered. Modbury, in the hundred of Ermington, sent members to parliament at Westminster, in the 34th of Edward I.

Ivy Bridge is a romantic village, over-topped to the north-north-east, by a hill, 1,130 feet above the sea, with some tumuli on its summit, and its face abrupt towards the south, geographically belonging to, if not part of the exterior line of Dartmoor, and called West Beacon Hill. Of this hill 631 feet up its ascent is composed of slaty and compact gran-wacke (one of the oldest secondary rocks) and the remainder of porphyrite granite. From Three-Barrow tor, near it, there is a most surprising view, from Portland in Dorsetshire, to the Lizard in Cornwall, and from the skirts of Dartmoor, to Blackdown-hills, in Somersetshire; in front, nearer the eye, the South Hams of Devon, from the Teign to the Tamar, the estuary of the Yealm, Plymouth Sound, Mount Edgcumbe, and the British Channel.

NOTE 40, Page 79.

The Yealm
Pride of our austral vales.

This river is well designated as "the pride of our austral vales," for though not mighty in volume, yet in beauty of course, it is surpassed by none of the other moor rivers, the fertility of its banks being evinced by the vigorous growth of many tall aspiring elms. Above Yealm bridge it forms the boundary between the hundreds of Plympton and Ermington, and thence are called Yealmouth and Yealnton, now a village of some extent, but once a borough, excused from returning members to parliament on account of poverty. Ethelwold, a Saxon king, had his chief palace, and Lessius, his lieutenant, was interred there. In the church yard is a stone 9 feet long, varying in thickness, which gradually diminishes towards the upper part, and is rough for nearly a foot at the lower extremity, as if intended to stand upright in the ground, lying east and west, and inscribed lengthways, in the middle, with the word *Toreus*, supposed by Mr Polwhele, to be a christianized Roman. In the church are several monuments to the Crockers (one of whom was standard-bearer to Edward IV.,) Pollexfens, Coplestons, and Bastards. Matthew Fitzherbert, a noble soldier, and one of the barons who assisted in obtaining Magna Charta from John, at Runnymede, is said to have been born here.

The banks of Yealm are adorned with Puzlinch, the seat of the Rev. John Yonge, having behind it a fir-crowned hill, and immediately below the meandering stream with its elms and the neat village of Yealmton. Further on is situated Kitley, the seat of E. P. Bastard, esq., M. P., upon the estuary of the Yealm, into which a tributary brook empties itself, after flowing through the grounds. In these is a limestone cavern of great extent and magnificent appearance when lighted up.

NOTE 41, Page 81.

His high wrought soul.

The picture drawn in the text is not imaginary. The story of Daniel Gumb, of Linkinhorne, in Cornwall, as given by Mr. C. S. Gilbert, in the first volume of his *Historical Survey* of that county, page 106, furnishes its original.

Gumb was bred a stone-cutter, but, by hard reading and close application from early youth, he acquired considerable knowledge of mathematics. Being of a reserved disposition, and discovering in his occupation on Cheesewring hill an immense block of granite, whose upper surface was an inclined plane, he immediately went to work, and excavating

the earth beneath to nearly the extent of the stone above, he shaped out what he considered a commodious habitation for himself and wife. The sides of this excavation he lined with cemented stone, making a chimney by perforating the earth at one side of the roof. The entrance was divided into several small apartments, separated by blocks of granite, and above was a kind of lodging-room, formed of two rough stone tables, one serving as a floor, the other as a ceiling. One part of the latter rested on a rock, the other on stones placed by main strength, the uppermost of which served as ridges in carrying off the rain water. The whole was surrounded by a walled courtlage. In this rugged dwelling Gumb and his family resided many years, the top of the house being used by him as an observatory of the heavenly bodies; on which he carved with a chisel various diagrams explanatory of the most difficult problems in Euclid, and the house itself was his chapel, as he was never known to attend the parish church or any other place of worship. The remains of this extraordinary habitation were visited by Mr. Gilbert, in 1814, when he found the wall of the courtlage fallen, and the whole in a dilapidated state. On the entrance is inscribed "D. GUMB, 1735."

NOTE 42, Page 85.

A Granite God.

This is an enormous mass of stone or pile of rocks upon Heighen Down in Manaton, rising to a height of more than 30 feet. At a distance it wears the appearance of a rude gigantic figure, but, on a nearer approach, it is found to consist of ledges of granite, irregularly piled on each other. It is generally considered as a rock idol, and bears the name of Bowerman's Nose, of which name there was a person in the Conqueror's time, who lived at Huntor or Houndtor in Manaton. In the road from Two Bridges to Tavistock Dr. Berger and his friend Mr. Necker were both struck at once with the resemblance of a granite rock to the Egyptian Sphinx in a mutilated state.

NOTE 43, Page 86.

—————'Tis said that here
The Druid wander'd.

Many have doubted, whether the Druids were even acquainted with the Moor, and much less that they there celebrated their superstitious rites, but the circles, the logans, the cromlech, and the rock basins, still remaining on or near the spot, leave no room for scepticism concerning the fact.

The two circles on the higher part of Dartmoor, above Ladle Bottom, and directly under Sittaford tor, which adjoin each other, and are known by the name of the Grey Wethers, from their fancied resemblance, at a short distance, to sheep, are of themselves alone sufficient to prove it. They consist of 30 stones, each varying from 3 to 5 feet in height, and from 7 to 9 feet apart, according to their size. Not more than half of them are erect, some being thrown down, and others removed. Both circles are 60 feet in diameter.

Quarnell Down contains a number of columns or circles, one of them inclosing a kistvaen or sepulchral chest. On Buckland Down is a small circle of the same kind, and another between Quarnell tor and Sharpitor.

At Drewsteignton is a logan or rocking stone.

The logan, when rocked, emits an audible murmur, of a peculiarly awful nature, and from the circumstance of its moving to and fro when touched, takes its name. But Vallency adopts a nicer definition, tracing it from the Irish *logh*, divine power, or spirit, which the Druids conceived to be infused into the stone, and thence consulted it as an oracle. These crafty priests had the art of inducing their infatuated votaries to believe that they alone could make a logan move, and using it as an ordeal, they thereby condemned or acquitted criminals. They likewise

employed it in divination, and to perambulate it was a signal mode of acquiring sanctity. Between Widicombe church and Rippen tor there was formerly a logan, called the Nutcrackers, and another on East down, named the Whooping Rock, from the noise it yielded in tempestuous weather, but the functions of both have long ceased. On the top of Lustleigh Cleve is another small logan. Bryant, in his *Ancient Mythology*, says, "It was usual for the ancients to place one stone upon another for a religious memorial." Appollonius Rhodius, in his first book, also speaks of one.

The only cromlech on the Moor is at Drewsteignton. In the parish of Shaugh, and other places, there are many rocks, which have a druidical semblance; but nature here is sportive in her operations, and the mind of the visitor, heated with enthusiasm, imagines some of them to have been consecrated to religious objects, and in most, if not all cases, excepting those specified, erroneously.

On the summit of Meerdon near Moreton, was once a large cairn, denominated the Giant's Tomb, and on the opposite side, near Blackstone, is a collection of stones, generally supposed to be druidical, and thence called the Altar. Some of the tors wear a sublime appearance, and even of art, as if anciently appropriated to the same worship, to which their being split both perpendicularly and horizontally into various

shapes and sizes, some regular and some irregular, mainly contributes. Puttor is one of these.

The number of rock basins is comparatively few, as, though there are numberless rocks and tors, yet all of them do not possess this distinction. Willistone and Blackstone rocks in Moreton, Sharpitor, Pentor, Miltor, Beltor, Kestor, Heytor, several rocks at Holne, and Mistor Pan exhibit them in greater or less perfection. They are always on the verge, and the Druids used them to obtain rain or dew pure and unadulterated from the heavens for lustral waters. Dr. Mac Culloch ascribes rock basins to the decomposition of the stone from the presence of water or the alternate action of air and water, the decomposed matter or gravel being mostly borne away by winds, but in some of the deeper hollows it continues.

Barrows, "the dark and narrow place of the grave," are not, perhaps, of druidical origin, but they often accompany the places resorted to by the followers of that worship. They are common in Moreton, Hennock, Widdicombe, Roborough, Dartmoor, on Quarnell, Hamel, and other downs, and West Beacon Hill, near Ivy Bridge has several. On Quarnell down in particular there is a barrow 94 paces round. One of the tors is so named from its having three barrows. Some of the barrows have been opened, but only bones and fragments of urns were found.

A cell was dug up at Insdon a few years ago.

In addition to these relics of former ages, many single erect stones, some inscribed and some not, are to be met with at different spots, which were either designed to commemorate the death of a hero, or a battle, or as a guide across the pathless wilds and bogs. At Lustleigh is an inscribed stone, with letters said to resemble those of an inscription mentioned by Mr. Morier, at Nashki Ruston, near Persepolis, in Persia. Two or three years since was an inscribed stone at Slowford, but it has been defaced and fitted as a step to Mr. Bowden's chapel, at Ivy Bridge. Another was in the bed of the river Erme at that place, full of carved work.

On the top of Cosson hill is a large cairn, and there are mounds of earth at the bottom, both of which may be referred to the druidical era, though not perhaps in themselves of druidical erection.

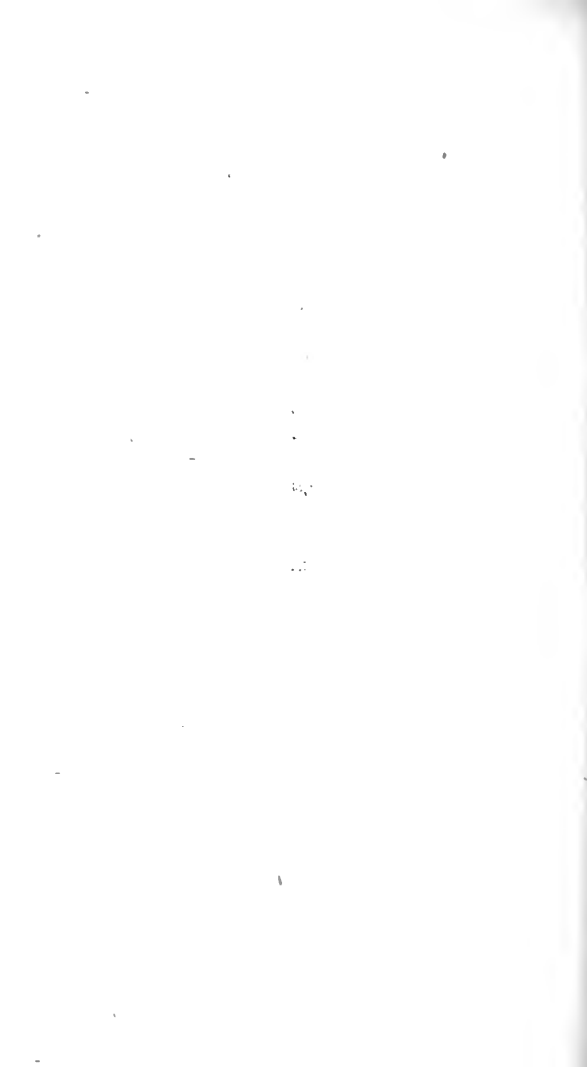
NOTE 44, Page 87.

*Moss, ivy, lichen—rises o'er the broad
Luxurious sward.*

There is nothing in which Dartmoor and its sister commons display more beauty than in their tors and rocks embossed with vegetation, which, in the language of the author of the *Philosophy of Nature*, “become more endeared to the eye of taste, from Nature having in a manner made them her own, by covering them with moss, lichen, and with ivy.”

Clothed with Musci, Hepaticæ, Fungi, &c., the commons of Dartmoor afford a rich harvest to the botanist and to the philosopher; a proof that vegetable life and joy are not confined to the less sterile parts of the earth.

END OF NOTES TO DARTMOOR.



MY NATIVE VILLAGE.

MY NATIVE VILLAGE.

TOUCH'D by the sunlight of the evening hour,
The elm still rises near thy aged tower
Dear, pensive HAREWOOD, and in that rich ray
E'en thy old lichen'd battlements seem gay :—
Through the bowed windows streams the golden glow,
The beam is sleeping on the tombs below ;
While, with its million flowers, yon hedge-row fair
Girts with green zone thy lowly House of Prayer.
No breeze plays with the amber leafage now,
Still is the cypress—still the ivy bough,
And but for that fleet bird that glances round
Thy spire, or darting o'er the sacred ground

Twitters for very joy, how strange and deep
The silence where the lost—the lov'd ones sleep !
Beside—there is nor lay, nor voice, nor breath,
A happy, living thing, where all around is—Death.

Dear, pensive HAREWOOD ! let no wanton feet
Profane the calmness of thy bless'd retreat ;
For here dove-eyed Affection seeks relief,
And tastes, unmark'd, the luxury of grief.
How sweet to trace where on those hillocks green
The sacred hand of Piety has been !
Rich hues are mingling with the pleasant grass,
The western gales breathe fragrance when they pass ;
The daisy lifts its unassuming head—
The jasmine droops above the honour'd dead—
Around the hawthorn flings its rich perfume—
And roses—earliest roses, bud and bloom ;—
The woodbine clasps the monumental urn,
And oft when Friendship hither hastes to mourn,
She hears the wild bee hum—the wild bird sing,
And all the tend'rest melodies of Spring ;

While one clear silvery rill that hastes along,
Chaunts in her ear its own sweet undersong.

So should the dead be honour'd, so should be
Their last dear resting place by brook and tree ;—
So should Affection sprinkle round the tomb
As Spring awakes, the loveliest flowers that bloom.
Sun, shower, and breeze should quicken,—cherish,
here

The freshest, fairest verdure of the year ;—
The elm with leaf untouch'd, with bough unriven,
Lift his majestic trunk, and soar to heav'n ;—
The oak of nameless age should proudly wave
His hundred hoary arms above the grave ;—
While birds of plaintive voice should through the
grove

Pour the heart-soothing lay of Pity and of Love !

Tree of the days of old—time-honour'd Yew—
Pride of my boyhood—manhood—age—Adieu !
Broad was thy shadow, mighty one, but now
Sits desolation on thy leafless bough !

That huge, and far-fam'd trunk, scoop'd out by age,
Will break, full soon, beneath the tempest's rage;
Few are the leaves lone sprinkled o'er thy breast,
There's bleakness, blackness on thy shiver'd crest !
When Spring shall vivify again the earth,
And yon blest vale shall ring with woodland mirth,
Morning, noon, eve,—no bird with wanton glee
Shall pour anew his poetry from thee ;
For thou hast lost thy greenness, and he loves
The verdure and companionship of groves—
Sings where the song is loudest, and the spray,
Fresh, fair, and youthful, dances in the ray !
Nor shall returning Spring, o'er storms and strife
Victorious, e'er recal thee into life !
Yet stand thou there—majestic to the last,
And stoop with grandeur to the conquering blast.
Aye stand thou there—for great in thy decay
Thou wondrous remnant of a far-gone day,
Thy name, thy might, shall wake in rural song,
Bless'd by the old—respected by the young ;
While all unknown, uncar'd for,—oak on oak
Of yon tall grove shall feel the woodman's stroke ;

One common, early fate awaits them all,
No sympathising eye shall mark their fall ;
And beautiful in ruin as they lie
For them shall not be heard one rustic sigh !

One wither'd bough leans o'er an infant's tomb,
Yon simple stone records his early doom !—
Sweet Boy ! the winter struck thee, and when Spring
Wav'd o'er the earth his rainbow-tinted wing,
The sun gave warmth and music to our vale,
And health, we fondly deem'd, fill'd every gale ;
In vain ! He pin'd, although his mother smil'd
Over a sinking heart, and bless'd her child ;
And could not—would not—see that Death was near,
But, strong in hope, calm'd every rising fear !
And still, through all to Love and Nature true,
Bore him where flowers in fairest clusters grew,
And loiter'd in the sunny grass, and rov'd
By the clear rills, and pluck'd the gems he lov'd ;—
The primrose that hangs o'er a sunny stream,
The king-cup with its glossy, golden gleam,

And that old favourite—the Daisy—born
By millions in the balmy, vernal morn—
The child's own flower ;—and these her gentle hands
Would join, to cheer him, in sweet verdurous bands.
Then he would smile, oh, when that smile would
break

A moment o'er his worn, and pallid cheek,
How she would gaze upon her angel-boy !
How in the mother triumph'd, Love—Hope—Joy !
And then the birds would flutter by, and he
Through the calm hour, would watch their motions
free ;

And when that haunter of green depths—the thrush
Flung his full melody from brake and bush,
'Twas beautiful to mark his mute surprise,
And the quick glances of his fitful eyes.
But harmonies of birds, and lapse of brooks,
And calm and silent hours in sun-touch'd nooks,
And charms of flowers, and happy birds and trees,
And healthful visitings of vernal breeze
Avail'd not ; ceaseless gnaw'd that worm which lies
So ambush'd in our English hearts,—and dies

But with the life it takes. Consumption now
Sat all reveal'd upon his marble brow,
And, sometimes, as in fierce derision, threw
O'er those fine features an angelic hue—
Quick shifting;—that strange, sudden bloom which
glows

As falsely as those colourings of the rose
Which seem so beautiful, and wear so well
Health's purest tint, while in its deepest cell—
Its depths of loveliest foldings, lurks a foe—
A canker that shall lay its splendor low !

He linger'd thus—this Human Blossom—till .
The life-gales of the Spring—those airs that fill
Our veins with fresh, young health, had pass'd away
And then a change came o'er him ; yet he lay
Fixing with unmov'd calm his glassy eye
Intense, upon his mother wandering nigh
His snow-white couch. And she would bend above
Her boy (how quenchless is a mother's love !)
And hope, aye against hope, but soon drew near,
Chasing all doubt, the hour of mortal fear—

He droop'd ; and as the Summer-day grew hot
 There came a voice of anguish from that cot
 Like Rachel's.

* * * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * *

Sacred is the voice of grief,
 And tears, that give the heart a sure relief,
 Must flow uncheck'd. 'Tis Time alone can bring
 Relief, and pluck from Sorrow its keen sting ;
 And deaden the fierce feelings of the mind
 And shed, at last, the wish and will resign'd.
 Years roll'd,—and though within that mourner's door
 The tones of gladness never enter'd more,
 Yet pensive peace, and meek content were there,
 Strong, ardent faith, and solitude, and prayer ;
 And from her lowly cot, at morn and even,
 The meekly warbled lay arose to Heaven !

Bard of the village ! o'er thy peaceful grave
 The bay should brighten, and the laurel wave ;—

Thy lyre no more shall charm the sylvan bower
Or soothe the hearth in winter's dreary hour.
Harewood ! thy bard's was still the usual lot
Of genius, to be prais'd—and be forgot ;—
To pour to wealth and rank the dulcet strain,
Yet dwell with penury and shrink with pain ;—
With Labour still to live from day to day,
And walk with Toil along life's rugged way.
Yet when blest freedom came with accents kind
And brief repose refresh'd his sinking mind,
How many a simple pleasure was his own !
How many a joy to vulgar minds unknown !
For Nature op'd to him—her darling child
The beautiful, the wonderful, the wild,
And he would wander forth where quiet dwells
In the dim depths of woods and forest dells,
Musing the hour away ; and where the shades
Grow darker, and the baffled sun-ray fades,
Amid the dark-wove foliage of the grove
He ever had a strange delight to rove.
Yet sometimes, where our lov'd Devonian yields
The noblest treasures of our southern fields,

He stray'd, and gave to memory loveliest themes
And swept his lyre to hail—The Land of Streams !
Anon the wayward wight would fearless scale
The black-brow'd cliff that overhung the dale,
And careless resting on that mountain throne,
Make the vast wealth of Prospect all his own
With rich appropriation. Far below
Rush'd the loud moorland torrent, dash'd to snow
By the rude rocks, and he would deeply pore
On that mad stream, and listen to its roar
Till haply the bold falcon, sweeping by,
Would scare him from some noon-day phantasy—
Some wild and wondrous fancies that retain
A strange and deep possession of the brain,
Ere Reason reassume her empire there,
And dash the mystic visions into air.

His wanderings and his musings,—hopes and fears,
His keen-felt pleasures, and his heart-wrung tears
Are past ;—the grave clos'd on him ere those days
Had come when on the scalp the snow-wreath plays ;

He perish'd ere his prime ; but they who know
What 'tis to battle with a world of woe,
From youth to elder manhood, feel too well
That grief, at last, within the deepest cell
Of the poor heart will bring decay, and shake
So fierce the soul—that Care like Age will make
“ The grasshopper a burden.” Slowly came
The mortal stroke, but to the end the flame
Of Poesy burn'd bright. With feeble hand
He touch'd his harp, but not at his command
Came now the rich, old music. Faintly fell
On his pain'd ear the strains he lov'd so well
And then his heart was broken. 'Neath yon sward
Flower-sprinkl'd now, rests Harewood's peasant bard ;
While power and opulence with senseless prate,
And useless pity seem to mourn his fate ;
With fulsome epitaph insult his grave,
And eulogize the man they would not save.

The village fane its noblo tower uprears,
Safe from the tempests of a thousand years ;—

Still in their ancient strength these walls arise,
And brave the rudest shocks of wintry skies !
And see, within—how beautiful !—time-proof,
O'er aisle and nave light springs the embowed roof !
The massive door is open ;—let me trace
With reverential awe the solemn place ;—
Ah, let me enter, once again the pew
Where the child nodded as the sermon grew ;
Scene of soft slumbers ! I remember now
The chiding finger, and the frowning brow
Of stern reprovers, when the ardent June
Flung through the glowing aisles the drowsy noon ;
Ah, admonitions vain ! a power was there
Which conquer'd e'en the sage, the brave, the fair,—
A sweet oppressive power—a languor deep,
Resistless shedding round delicious sleep !
Till, clos'd the learn'd harangue, with solemn look
Arose the chaunter of the sacred book,—
The parish clerk (death-silenc'd) far-fam'd then
And justly, for his long and loud—Amen !
Rich was his tone, and his exulting eye
Glanc'd to the ready choir, enthron'd on high,

Nor glanc'd in vain ; the simple-hearted throng
Lifted their voices, and dissolv'd in song ;
Till in one tide deep rolling, full and free
Rang through the echoing pile, old England's psal-
mody.

See, halfway down the vale whose vagrant stream
Rolls its bright waters, oft the poet's theme,
True to the call of his own village bells—
Sweet call to him, the village pastor* dwells.
Shepherd of Harewood, peace has bless'd thy days,
A calm half century of prayer and praise ;—
The snows of time are on thy honour'd head
Yet—is thy step not weak—thy vigour fled ;
Not yet those snows that on thy temples lie
Have dimm'd the fires that sparkle in thine eye !
Clear are the tones of that persuasive voice
Which bids the sinner fear, the saint rejoice ;—
How oft to wake the unrepentant, falls
The burst of eloquence around these walls !

* “ One to whom solitude and peace were given,
Calm village silence and the hope of heaven.”

How, thronging deep, the listening crowd admire
That eye of lightning, and that lip of fire !
Hang on the cheering truths that sweetly flow,
Warm with the theme, and share the holy glow,
List that love-breathing voice at morn or even
And wake the hymn that lifts the soul to heaven.

My native village, thou hast still the power
To charm me, as in boyhood's far-gone hour !
Years have flown on—"chance, change" have pass'd
o'er me

Since last I gamboll'd on thy peaceful lea ;—
Years have flown on—and from the oft-trod brow
Of the old hill, I gaze upon thee now ;—
And tearful mark each scene, so known, so true,
The very picture which my memory drew.
Ah, Harewood, early doom'd from thee to roam,
The sketch was fair which Fancy form'd of HOME !
Care—absence—distance—as to thee I turn'd
But fed the Local Fire which inly burn'd ;
And Hope oft whisper'd that, all perils past,
In thy dear bosom I should rest at last.

Whence is this wondrous sympathy that draws
Our souls to HOME by its mysterious laws
Where'er we wander ; and with stronger love
Sways the touch'd heart, more distant as we rove ?
Ask of the soldier who, in climes afar,
Stands undismay'd amid the ranks of war ;—
Who, with unfaltering foot where thousands fall,
Advancing gives his bosom to the ball ;—
Or with a passive courage nobler still,
Undaunted bears of strife the every ill ;—
Unmurmuring suffers all that man may bear,
Firm to sustain, and resolute to dare !—
Ask of him what has nerv'd his arm in fight,
And cheer'd his soul in visions of the night ;—
That 'mid the deep, dark gloom—the tempest's wrath,
Oft flung a ray of comfort on his path !
'Twas the sweet wish once more to view the strand
Far—far away—his own, blest, native land :—
To live again where first he drew his breath,
And sleep, at last, with those he lov'd—in Death !
Dear HOME, wherever seated,—plac'd on high
Some cot amid the mountains where the cry

Of the king-eagle mingles with the gale,
And the storm shrieks that never scares the vale ;—
Or found in dells where glows the southern ray,
Flowers bloom, birds sing, and fragrant zephyrs
play ;—

Dear HOME, wherever seated,—loveliest, best
Of all on earth to him—his hope, his rest,
'Twas thy resistless influence that gave
Hope in the field and comfort on the wave ;—
'Twas *that* which, doom'd an exile yet to be,
Attracts my soul, sweet village, thus to thee !

Yes, ye are fair as ever,—field and wood,
And cots that gem the calm, green solitude,
And harvest ripening in the golden gleam,
And flowers, rich fringing all yon wayward stream.
The village play-ground lifts its age-worn trees,
And flings young voices on the evening breeze ;—
The rill which flow'd of old yet freshly flows,
The lake yet spreads in beautiful repose ;—
There waves the very grove whose walks among
I oft have stray'd to hear the blackbird's song,

Long may the wild bird that sweet refuge know ;—
Curs'd be the axe that lays its foliage low ;—
Long, bless'd as now with minstrelsy and flowers,
Rise, Harewood, rise, among thy blushing bowers ;—
And as yon stream, its moorland journey past,
Glides smoothly through the unechoing vales at last,
So, spent with toil, in Life's tumultuous day,
A pilgrim fainting from his rugged way,
Sweet on thy peaceful bosom let me rest
Like a tir'd bird in its own quiet nest ;
And find (how exquisite to find it) there
Life's stormy noon crown'd with a sunset fair.

NOTE, Page 216.

*How sweet to trace where on those hillocks green
The sacred hand of Piety has been !*

“Sweet” indeed ! This custom of ornamenting with flowers, &c. the graves of the deceased, is still to be found in Wales, in Switzerland, and in several parts of France. It is a beautiful—an interesting—a holy custom ! What truly can be more touching than to behold one friend bending over the grave of another, sprinkling seeds, or inserting lovely plants in the enamelled turf ? But such heart-stirring scenes are almost unknown in England !

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE TWINS OF LAMERTON.*

'Twas pleasant to behold them—side by side
Sunk in soft slumber, with their arms enlac'd
Around each other's ivory neck—a smile
Playing upon the angel cheek, as swam
Delicious fancies through the brain—young joys
Renew'd in golden dreams; while now and then
The snow-white coverlid, by Love's dear hand
Spread o'er them carefully, was flung aside
By a fair, graceful foot, disclosing half

* For an historical sketch quaintly but beautifully written, of these really remarkable brethren, read Prince's *Worthies of Devon*.

"In the parish church of Lamerton," writes the same author, "is a noble memorial erected, not only to these two brothers, but to several others of them, whose images are there lively represented."

There were eight sons and eight daughters in this family, of whom six were twins.

The form of a young Hercules. How sweet,
How beautiful in rest, the seraph pair
To all who mark'd them thus ; but, oh, to her—
The mother that bent over them—how full
Of Heaven the raptur'd gaze ! And then the morn
When, sleep's light visions flown, upon her ear
Broke their first, welcome voices, and her lip
Revell'd on their's, insatiate ! The earth
Through all her millions, such another twain
Possess'd not—one in feature, and unknown
Apart, but that affection on the arm
Of the dear younger playfully entwin'd
An azure chaplet. Nor alone in form,
In stature, lineaments, wore they the same
Perplexing, undistinguishable semblance,—one
In soul they liv'd ;—a sympathy divine
Mix'd in their wondrous being, and they lov'd,
Dislik'd, fear'd, hated, languish'd, as at once
That common spirit sway'd. E'en distance had,
'Tis said, no power to part them, for they felt—
Asunder and remote, the self same moods—

Felt mutual hopes, joys, fears,—and ever held
Invisible communion !

Thus they grew
To their strange manhood ; for they rose to man
Unchang'd in mien, and oft perplexing still
The charm'd beholder,—baffling e'en the glance
Parental :—thus they grew, and inly mov'd
By the mysterious feeling which had sway'd
Their infancy. Twin roses were they, nurs'd
“From bud to beauty,” by the summer gale
And summer sun. Alas that fate should blight
Those flowers—the ornament, delight, love, hope,
Of their fair, native bower !

But fiercely swept
The unexpected gale ! The storm of Life
Burst loud and terribly, as calmly flew
The love-wing'd moments of the sacred band
Of brethren, and of sisters, who look'd on,
And, wondering, gaz'd to ecstasy. Their home
Was as a quiet nest embosom'd deep

In woods of some soft valley where the hand
Of plunderer comes not, and the sudden gale
But seldom shrieks, and silence kindly spreads
O'er all her downy wing.

Loud blew the blast
Of war, and shook the nations. France unroll'd
Her lilied flag, and England in the breeze
Wav'd her dread lion banner. Then the cot,
The palace, sent its children forth, to fall
By thousands, at Ambition's startling voice,
And man his brother man infuriate met
In the death grapple ;—shedding oft his blood
Unmark'd, in battle fields, that but to few
Give e'en the dear-bought recompence to live
In stories of the future !

From the arms
Of sweet affection—from the dear caress—
The agonizing and enduring clasp
Of home's beloved circle—forth they came
The inseparable brethren, soon to prove

Far other scenes than in the rural shade
Had bless'd their rare existence. Soon, amid
The shock of conflict—side by side, they stood,
That matchless pair—the beautiful, the brave—
Winning all hearts : and, as the two of old,
“Lovely and pleasant in their lives,” they were
In death not separated, for they met
(So it should be) one common fate, and sank
Together to a soldier's grave !

THE SAILOR'S FATE.

A peasant, in pursuing some sheep which had wandered from their accustomed pasturage, discovered, in the middle of the naked solitude (Dartmoor) that stretches from Lydford nearly twenty miles in a south-eastern direction, the body of a sailor, much emaciated, and in such a state as gave reason to think he had been lying on the spot five or six weeks. His countenance, however, was serene, and his posture composed; a small bundle of linen supported his head, and the remains of a faithful dog lay at his feet.

Warner's Walk through the Western Counties.

HE perish'd on the Moor! The pitying swain
Found him outstretch'd upon the wide, wild plain;
There lay the wanderer by the quivering bog,
And, at his foot, his patient, faithful dog.
Thrice gallant brute! that through the weary day
Shar'd all the perils of the lonely way,
Fac'd the fierce storm, and, by his master's side,
In the cold midnight, laid him down and died!

Thrice gallant brute ! to thee the local bard
Shall sweep his lyre, fidelity's reward ;
Thy fate shall wake the frequent sigh, and Fame,
At least in moorland annals, grave thy name !

Was it for this (so Fancy sings) the Tar
Consum'd his vigorous youth in climes afar,
And nobly dared, in danger's every form,
The ocean battle and the ocean storm ;
Undaunted stood where on the blood-red wave
The death-shot peal'd among the English brave ;
Or scal'd the slipp'ry yard, where, pois'd on high,
As the dread lightning burn'd along the sky,
He fearless hung, though, yielding to the blast,
Beneath him groan'd the rent and trembling mast ?
Ah ! haply fired by home's enchanting name,
From tropic shores the enthusiast sailor came ;
To the fleet gales his bounding vessel gave,
And reach'd, at last, the fresh, wild, western wave ;
Till, soon descried, upon the eager view
Dark from the surge the old Bolerium* grew :

* The Land's End, Cornwall.

'Then, as he heard the shoreward billows roll,
High glow'd the local fire within his soul;
And now he raptur'd cried, "All dangers o'er,
My native land we meet to part no more."
While England, England on the foam-swept lee
Uprose, proud peering o'er the subject sea,
Disclos'd at once to him her matchless charms,
And woo'd the wearied exile to her arms.

Where the swift Torridge, Tamar's sister, flows
Through northern fields, perhaps his cot arose;
And stout of heart, and strong of foot, he pass'd
With rapid course along the lessening waste.
'Twas a wild path, by e'en the peasant shunn'd,
But then his beck'ning Canaan lay beyond.
Already, fancy-fired, he saw each scene
Well known and lov'd—the church, the village-
green—
Saw the hills sweetly rise, his native dells
Soft sink, and heard the music of the bells—
Delightful melodies, that still engage
The love of youth and joy the heart of age.

Illusions all ! down rush'd the moorland night ;
He met the mountain tempest in its might.
No guide to point the way, no friend to cheer ;
Gloom on his path, the fateful snow-storm near !
Alone !—ah, when the ocean conflict grew
More loud, more fierce, and swift the death-shot flew,
Or round his bark the infuriate billows rag'd,
'Twas sympathy that all his toils assuag'd ;
With dauntless hearts, with friends and comrades
 dear
He shar'd the danger, and he smil'd at fear.
But now—man far away—an exile poor,
He wander'd cheerless on the untrodden moor !
Swift from the cloud the arrowy lightning flash'd,
Fierce o'er the waste the impetuous waters dash'd,
Deep was the howl of torrents ; and when broke,
Drowning the torrent's voice, the thunder-stroke,
Wide horror reign'd : again the deathful flash
Hiss'd on his track—again the mighty crash
Startled, but conquer'd not, the brave ! He stood
Amid the storm, in that great solitude,

With all a seaman's high, enduring soul,
Eyed the keen fires, and heard the fate-peal roll;
And though the warring elements had power
To crush him in that dark and trying hour,
They shook not that true spirit firm and fast,
Which sways a British seaman to the last !

He perish'd on the moor ! No shelt'ring grave
Oped for the hapless hero of the wave ;
Till, rescued from the winter gale's dread wing,
Waked the lone desert at the touch of spring.
Then feet came o'er the wild ;—by hill and rock
Sought the rude swain the wanderers of his flock.
There on the silent waste the victim lay,
The sport of winds through many a brumal day !
And, rough though highland swain, a generous sigh
Burst at the lot of poor mortality :
So cold, so pale, so shrunk that manly brow,
That lip so mute, that eye so rayless now ;
That livid form which seem'd so rudely cast
From man, and whitening in the boreal blast !

He saw and felt, and, mourning at the doom
Of the poor stranger, bore him to his tomb
In the lone moorland church-yard:—yet no stone
Records his name—his home, his race, unknown;
And nought remains of him in village lore
But this sad truth—he perish'd on the moor!

CHILDE THE HUNTER.

Few roam the heath, e'en when the sun—
The golden sun is high ;
And the leaping, laughing streams are bright,
And the lark is in the sky.

But when upon the ancient hills
Descends the giant cloud,
And the lightning leaps from Tor to Tor,*
And the thunder peal is loud :—

* For a description of the Tors of Dartmoor see Note 8 of the Poem on that subject.

Heaven aid that hapless traveller then
 Who o'er the Wild may stray
For bitter is the moorland storm,
 And man is far away.

Yet blithe the highland hunter leaves
 His cot at early morn,
And on the ear of Winter pours
 The music of his horn :—

The eye of highland hunter sees
 No terrors in the cloud ;
His heart quakes not at the lightning flash,
 Nor the thunder long and loud !

Yet oft the shuddering peasant tells
 Of him, in days of yore,
Who in the sudden snow-storm fell—
 The Nimrod of the Moor !

And when the Christmas tale goes round
By many a peat fireside,
The children list, and shrink to hear
How Childe of Plymstoke died !

The lord of manors fair and broad—
Of gentle blood was he—
Who lov'd full well the mountain chace
And mountain liberty.

Slow broke the cheerless morn—the cloud
Wreath'd every moorland hill ;
And the thousand brooks that cheer'd the heath,
In sunny hours, were still.

For Winter's wizard hand had check'd
Their all-rejoicing haste ;
And flung a fearful silence o'er
The solitary waste.

When Childe resolv'd with hound and horn,
To range the forest wide ;
And seek the noble red-deer where
The Plym's dark waters glide.

Of sportsmen brave who hunted then
The leader bold was he,
And full in the teeth of the dread north wind
He led that company.

They rous'd the red-deer from his lair
Where those dark waters glide ;—
And swifter than the gale he fled
Across the forest wide.

With cheer and with shout, the jovial rout
The old Tor hurried by ;—
And they startled the morn with the merry horn,
And the staunch hound's echoing cry !

'The moorland eagle left his cliff—
 'The hawk soar'd far away—
And with that shout and cheer they scar'd
 The raven from his prey.

They follow'd through the rock-strew'd glen ;—
 'They plung'd through the river's bed :—
And scal'd the hill top where the Tor
 Uplifts his hoary head.

But gallantly that noble deer
 Defies the eager throng,
And still through wood, and brake, and fen
 He leads the chace along.

Now through the flashing stream he darts
 The wave aside he flings ;
Now o'er the cataract's bright arch
 With fearless leap he springs !

And many a chasm yawning wide
 With a desperate bound he clears ;—
Anon like a shadow he glances by
 The rock of six thousand years !

But now swift sailing on the wind
 The bursting cloud drew near ;
And there were sounds upon the gale
 Might fill the heart with fear !

And, one by one, as fast the clouds
 The face of heav'n deform,
Desert the chase, and wisely shun
 The onset of the storm.

And some there were who deem'd they heard
 Strange voices in the blast ;—
And some—that on the shudd'ring view
 A form mysterious pass'd ;—

Who rode a shadowy courser, that
A mortal steed might seem,—
But left no hoof-mark on the ground,
No foam upon the stream !

'Twas fancy all ;—yet from his side,
The jovial crew are gone ;
And Childe across the dark'ning heath
Pursues his way—alone.

He threaded many a mazy bog—
He dashed through many a stream ;—
But spent—bewilder'd—check'd his steed,
At evening's latest gleam.

For far and wide the highland lay
One pathless waste of snow ;—
He paus'd !—the angry heav'n above,
The faithless bog below.

He paus'd !—and soon through all his veins
Life's current feebly ran ;
And—heavily—a mortal sleep
Came o'er the dying man :

The dying man—yet love of life
In this his hour of need,
Uprais'd the master's hand to spill
The heart-blood of his steed !

And on the ensanguin'd snow that steed
Soon stretch'd his noble form ;—
A shelter from the biting blast—
A bulwark to the storm :—

In vain—for swift the bleak wind piled
The snow-drift round the corse ;
And Death his victim struck within
The disembowell'd horse.

Yet one dear wish—one tender thought
Came o'er that hunter brave ;—
'To sleep at last in hallow'd ground,
And find a christian grave—

And ere he breath'd his latest sigh
And day's last gleam was spent,
He with unfaltering finger wrote
His bloody testament ;—

The fyrst that fyndes & brings me to my grave,
The lands of Plymstoke he shal have.

Note.—"A tradition has existed in the Moor, that John Childe, of Plymstock, a gentleman of large possessions, and very fond of hunting, whilst enjoying that amusement during an inclement season, was benighted, lost his way, and perished through cold, near Fox Tor, in the south quarter of the Moor; after taking the precaution to kill his horse, and, for the

sake of warmth to creep into its belly, leaving a paper denoting that whoever should bury his body, should have his lands at Plymstock.

“These circumstances coming to the knowledge of the monks of Tavistock, they eagerly seized the body, and were conveying it to that place, but learning on the way, that some people of Plymstock were waiting at a ford to intercept the prey, they cunningly ordered a bridge to be built, out of the usual track, thence pertinently called Guile Bridge, and succeeding in their object, became possessed of, and enjoyed the lands until the dissolution of the monasteries, when the Russell family received a grant of them, and it still retains them.”

In memory of Childe, a tomb was erected to him in a plain, a little below Fox Tor, which was standing about twenty years since, when a Mr. Windeatt, having received a new “take” or allotment, in which the tomb was included, *nearly destroyed it, by appropriating some of the stones for building, and door steps ! ! !* The whole, when perfect, wore an antique and impressive appearance.

THE DRUIDS.

WRITTEN ON THE BORDERS OF DARTMOOR,
1826.

How beautifully hangs
The leaf of the old wood above the rocks
That strew the moorland border. Every bough
Is grasp'd by the devouring moss, and Time,
Age after age, has thinn'd the verdurous locks
Of the hoar foresters ;—the scalp is bare
Of many a noble oak, but from the glance
Intense, of summer, there is shelter yet,
And the red deer amid the temperate shade
Delights to stray ;—the while a gentle brook,
That from a fresh, exhaustless moorland fount
Descends, is music to his ear. The beam

Which struggles through the amber leafage, plays
Fitfully on the pleasant grass, and holds
Divided empire with the grateful gloom
All the long listless day. And in the glades—
The rich sun-lighted glades that lie around,
Like islands in this leafy ocean, rise,
Of every hue, sweet flowers, that bud and bloom
And die by thousands, scarcely seen or bless'd,
Save by some wanderer who comes to gaze
On Nature's holiest sanctuaries, where
The wind, the shower, the sun delight to shed
Their influences all divine, amid
The everlasting, silent sabbath held
On moor and mountain.

In yon vale, a stream
Is singing to the birds—the answering birds
That in the under-forest safely build
Their innocent, quiet homes. E'en now their lays
Full-hearted roll, and in the sunshine grow
Louder and louder :—chief the speckled thrush—
First, best musician of the thicket—he

Who loves the hawthorn, and from that sweet bower
Of fragrance and of beauty flings his note
Upon the morning gale, is heard above
The feather'd myriads. But not always thus
Came on the ravish'd ear the mingled strains
Of stream and bird :—

The unhallow'd hymn arose
E'en from this very spot (so legends say)
'To Jupiter. The oak* that nobly stood
Lovely in age, sole monarch of the grove,

* The fairest and tallest oak which the forest could produce, was the symbol of Jupiter, and when properly consecrated and prepared became his actual representative.

Sometimes their sacred groves were fenced in with rude palisades, and at other times the hill was enclosed with a mound of earth to mark the limits of consecration, to awe the profane, and to prevent all intrusion on their sacred mysteries. Within the precincts of this enclosure, every tree was sprinkled with human blood.

But beside the sacrifice of beasts, which was common to the Druids, they had a custom, which in point of cruelty and detestation surpasses all that we have hitherto surveyed. This consisted in the offering of human victims at the polluted shrines of their imaginary gods. At these altars their enemies were sacrificed, and their friends were offered. Sometimes the vigorous youth and comely virgin were immolated on these sanguinary altars, and sometimes the smiling infant was carried from the bosom of its mother to the flames, which terminated its life.

Was his, and on the mighty stem, inscribed
In mystic characters, the Druid fix'd
His name tremendous. On the sacred trees
That rose, as these now rise, in all their strength
And loveliness, his hands polluted flung
A baptism unholy ;—aye that priest
Sprinkled upon the beautiful foliage—blood !—
And Time has not yet flung to earth the rude
Romantic altar, where he ruthless shed
Life's purple current to appease the gods
Revengeful ! Still the awful circle stands
Majestic—venerable—time-worn—hung
With wreaths of the gloss'd ivy, drooping on
In fanciful festoons from stone to stone ;
And waving in the melancholy breeze
That moans through the lone moorland. Pale,
 depress'd,
Trembling, beneath yon giant pillars pass'd,
Haply, the Druid's victims. Not unmov'd
I tread where erst, fierce darting to the skies,
Quiver'd the flame of the dread Moloch, gorged
With blood e'en to the full. O here the fair,

The brave—the mother and her spotless babe—
The maid, blooming in vain,—the wise, the good,
Felon and captive—age and shuddering youth,
In one vile holocaust, to fancied gods
Pour'd out their souls in fire ; amid the blast*
Which the loud trumpet flung—the deafening clash
Of cymbal—and the frantic, frenzied yell
Of an infuriate priesthood, drowning deep
In one infernal burst of sounds, the shriek
Of suffering humanity !

* While they were performing these horrid rites, the drums and trumpets sounded without intermission, that the cries of the miserable victims might not be heard, or distinguished by their friends ; it being accounted very ominous if the lamentations of either children or parents were distinctly heard while the victim was burning.

Drew's History of Cornwall.

LYDFORD BRIDGE.*

STREAM of the mountain ! never did the ray
Of the high summer pierce the gloom profound
Whence rise the startling and eternal sounds
Of thy mad, tortur'd waters ! Beautiful
Are all thy sister streams—most beautiful—
And rill and river lift their sweet tones all
Rejoicing ; but for thee has horror shap'd
A bed, and curs'd the spot with cries that awe
The soul of him who listens ! From the brink
The traveller hies, and meditates, aghast,
How, e'en when winter tenfold horrors flung

* For the incident on which this poem is founded, the reader is referred to " Warner's Walk in the Western Counties."

Around the gulph, a fellow being—here—
Through darkness plung'd to death !

His fate is still

Fresh in the memory of the aged swain,
And in the upland cottages the tale
Is told with deep emotion ; for the morn
Of life rose o'er that Suicide in rich
And lovely promise, as the vernal day
O'er nature oft ; though thus it closed, abrupt
As the shades drop upon Ausonian fields
When rains the black volcano ! Hapless youth !
The dæmon that in every age has won
Millions of souls—won thine. If Gaming hold
On high her fascinating lure, let man
Beware ;—to conquer is to flee. He heard
Who perish'd here,—he heard the tempter's tale
Bewitching ; and from Play's short dream awoke
To misery. Swift through the burning brain
Shot the dread purpose, and remorse and shame
Heated his blood to madness. Should he dare
The world's dread sneer, and be a loathed mark

For its unsparing finger?—rather rush
To death and to forgetfulness;—thus breath'd
The lying fiend. In vain that fatal night
Rag'd the loud winter storm,—the victim fled
From friends and home. The lightning o'er his path
Flash'd horribly—the thunder peal'd—the winds
Mournfully blew; yet still his desperate course
He held; and fierce he urg'd his gallant steed
For many a mile. The torrent lifted high
Its voice,—he plung'd not yet into the breast
Of the dark waters! By the cliff he pass'd,—
He sprang not from it—gloomier scenes than these,
And death more terrible, his spirit sought—
The caverns of the Lyd!

Why seeks the man

A weary of the world to quit it thus?—
To leap through horrors to the vast unknown,
And haste to dread eternity by ways
That make the heart-blood of the living chill
To think on?—To the destin'd goal he swept
With eye unflinching and with soul unawed,

Through the wild night ; by precipice and peak
Tremendous,—over bank, and bridge, and ford—
Breasted the torrent—climb'd the treacherous brink—
Scal'd the rock-crested hill, and burst anon
Into the valley, where a thousand streams,
Born of the mountain storm, with arrowy speed
Shot madly by. His spirit scorn'd them all—
These dangers and those sounds—for he was strong
To suffer ; and one master aim possess'd,
With an unnatural and resistless power,
That lost, lost victim !—On he sternly plung'd
Amid the mighty tumult ;—o'er his brow
Quicker and brighter stream'd the lightning ;—loud
And louder spoke the thunder ; still, on—on
He press'd his steed—the frightful gulf, at last,
Was won,—the river foam'd above the dead !

Note.—The scenery round Lydford is singularly picturesque and romantic ; but the most prominent objects of curiosity and admiration are, the Bridge and two Cascades. The former bears great analogy,

in situation and character, to the celebrated Devil's Bridge in Wales. It consists of one rude arch, thrown across a narrow rocky chasm, which sinks nearly eighty feet from the level of the road. At the bottom of this channel the small river Lyd is heard rattling through its contracted course. The singularity of this scene is not perceived in merely passing over the bridge: to appreciate its character, and comprehend its awfully impressive effects, it is necessary to see the bridge, the chasm, and the roaring water, from different projecting crags which impend over the river. A little distance below the bridge, the fissure gradually spreads its rocky jaws; the bottom opens; and instead of the dark precipices which have hitherto overhung and obscured the struggling river, it now emerges into day, and rolls its murmuring current through a winding valley, confined within magnificent banks, darkened with woods, which swell into bold promontories, or fall back into sweeping recesses, till they are lost to the eye in distance. Thickly shaded by trees, which shoot out from the sides of the rent, the scene at Lydford bridge is not so terrific as it would have been, had a little more light been let in upon the abyss, just sufficient to produce a darkness visible. As it is, however, the chasm cannot be regarded without shuddering; nor will the stoutest heart meditate unappalled upon the dreadful anecdotes connected with the spot.

Among the many recorded traditions it is related,

that a London rider was benighted on this road, in a heavy storm, and, wishing to get to some place of shelter, spurred his horse forward with more than common speed. The tempest had been tremendous during the night; and in the morning the rider was informed that Lydford Bridge had been swept away. He shuddered to reflect on his narrow escape; his horse having cleared the chasm by a great sudden leap in the middle of his course, though the occasion of his making it was at the time unknown.

Two or three persons have chosen this spot for self-destruction; and in a moment of desperation, have dashed themselves from the bridge into the murky chasm. The scene is in itself highly terrific; and with these awful associations, has an extraordinary effect on the feelings. About half a mile south of the bridge is the first Cascade, formed by the waters of a small rivulet, which rises on the moors in the neighbourhood; and at this spot unites with the Lyd. The fall is not very considerable in its usual quantity of water; but, like most mountain streams, is greatly augmented by storms, when a large sheet rushes over a rocky ledge, and throws itself down a perpendicular precipice of above one hundred feet. But though the cascade is a pleasing and interesting part of the scene, this single feature is almost lost in contemplating the whole of the landscape.

Beauties of England and Wales.

THE PIXIES OF DEVON.

The enthusiast gazed, like one bewildered
And breathless with immortal visitings,—
He sat in chill delight; nor stirr'd his head,
Lest all should pass away like shadowy things :
Now would his eye be dazed with the wings
Of spangled fay, hovering o'er blossoms white ;—
And now he listen'd to lone thrilling strings
Of magic lutes—and saw the harebell, bright
In its blue veins, for there nestled a form of light.
Romance of Youth.

'THEY are flown,
Beautiful fictions ! Hills, and vales, and woods,
Mountains and moors of Devon, ye have lost
The enchantments, the delights, the visions all—
The elfin visions that so bless'd the sight
In the old days, romantic. Nought is heard
Now, in the leafy world, but *earthly* strains—
Sounds, yet most sweet, of breeze, and bird, and
brook,

And waterfall ; the day is voiceless else,
And night is strangely mute !—the hymnings high,
The immortal music men of ancient times
Heard ravish'd oft, are flown ! O ye have lost,
Mountains, and moors, and meads the radiant throngs,
That dwelt in your green solitudes, and fill'd
The air, the fields, with beauty and with joy
Intense ;—with a rich mystery that awed
The mind, and flung around a thousand hearths
Divinest tales, that through the enchanted year
Found passionate listeners !

The very streams

Brighten'd with visitings of these so sweet
Ethereal creatures ! They were seen to rise
From the charm'd waters which still brighter grew
As the pomp pass'd to land, until the eye
Scarce bore the unearthly glory. Where they trod
Young flowers, but not of this world's growth, arose,
And fragrance, as of amaranthine bowers
Floated upon the breeze. And mortal eyes
Look'd on their revels all the luscious night ;

And unprov'd, upon their ravishing forms
Gaz'd, wistfully, as in the dance they mov'd
Voluptuous, to the thrilling touch of harp
Elysian !

And by gifted eyes were seen
Wonders—in the still air,—and beings bright
And beautiful—more beautiful than throng
Fancy's ecstatic regions, peopled now
The sunbeam, and now rode upon the gale
Of the sweet summer-noon.—Anon they touch'd
The earth's delighted bosom, and the glades
Seem'd greener, fairer, and the enraptur'd woods
Gave a glad, leafy murmur,—and the rills
Leap'd in the ray for joy ; and all the birds
Threw into the intoxicating air their songs
All soul.—The very archings of the grove,
Clad in cathedral gloom from age to age,
Lighten'd with living splendours ; and the flowers
Tinged with new hues, and lovelier, upsprung
By millions in the grass, that rustled now
To gales of Araby !

The seasons came
In bloom or blight, in glory or in shade,
The shower or sunbeam fell or glanc'd as pleas'd
Those potent elves. They steer'd the giant cloud
Through heaven at will, and with the meteor flash
Came down in death or sport ; aye, when the storm
Shook the old woods, they rode, on rainbow wings,
The tempest, and, anon, they rein'd its rage
In its fierce, mid career. But ye have flown,
Beautiful fictions of our fathers !—flown
Before the wand of Science, and the hearths
Of Devon, as lags the disenchanted year,
Are passionless and silent !

Note.—The age of Pixies, like that of chivalry, is gone. There is, perhaps, at present, scarcely a house where they are reputed to visit. Even the fields and lanes which they formerly frequented seem to be nearly forsaken. Their music is rarely heard ; and they appear to have forgotten to attend to their ancient midnight dance.—*Drew's Cornwall.*

END OF VOL. I.





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